

ham Facilo magazine

NOVEMBER 1976

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The DS-3000 and DS-4000 series of KSR and RO terminals provide silent, reliable, all-electronic TTY transmission and reception, or read-only (RO) operation of different combinations



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These are some of the highlights, The full range of features and specifications for the ST-6000 and the DS series of KSR and RO terminals is covered in comprehensive data sheets available on request. Write for them now—and tune in to the most sophisticated TTY operation you can have today... or in the future.

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ham radio magazine

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volume 9, number 11

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ham radio magazine is published monthly by Communications Technology, Inc Greenville, New Hampshire 03048 Telephone: 603-878-1441

> subscription rates U.S. and Canada: one year, \$10.00 three years, \$20.00 Worldwide: one year, \$12.00 three years, \$24.00

> > foreign subscription agents Ham Radio Canada Box 114, Goderich Ontario, Canada, N7A 3Y5

Ham Radio Europe Box 444 194 04 Upplands Vasby, Sweden

Ham Radio France 20 bis, Avenue des Clarions 89000 Auxerre, France

Ham Radio Holland Postbus 3051 Delft 2200, Holland

Ham Radio Italy STE, Via Maniago 15 I-20134 Milano, Italy

Ham Radio UK Post Office Box 64, Harrow Middlesex HA3 6HS, England Holland Radio, 143 Greenway Greenside, Johannesburg Republic of South Africa

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are available from University Microfilms Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103

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Second-class postage paid at Greenville, N.H. 03048 and at additional mailing offices



Interference on the amateur bands is something that most of us have learned to live with, at least to a certain extent, but in recent months I have noticed an increasing number of bad operating practices cropping up on our bands. Apparently other amateurs have been troubled, too, because I have received a number of letters on the subject. None of these practices is new, but they're more offensive because the bands are much more crowded than they used to be. Deliberate interference, tuning up on net frequencies, playing music, calling CQ without listening first, offensive language, incorrect identification (or no identification at all), using a kilowatt when 100 watts is adequate, talking crosstown on 20 meters instead of using vhf-fm – the list could go on and on.

There's no question that our high-frequency bands are crowded, but deliberate and malicious interference, and discourteous operating tactics, aren't going to relieve the situation, anymore than elbowing your way to the front of the checkout line at the local supermarket is going to get you anything more than a fat lip! In case you hadn't noticed, everything is more crowded today — the population has exploded, the expressways and turnpikes are jammed, homes are being built on smaller and smaller pieces of land, and even on the remotest trail of the high Sierras it's impossible to escape from the inevitable discarded beer can — practically everywhere you go you find a mass of humanity. It follows that we'll have more and more congestion on the amateur bands, but congestion doesn't mean bedlam. Zeroing your kilowatt on a QSO or local net is not going to make them move. Why not join them? They'd probably be glad to have you.

Today, there is a net for almost every range of interest — they aren't restricted to handling traffic. Some of the groups that congregate on the bands are not really nets at all, but simply groups of hams who get together for a common purpose. There are DX nets, the county hunters, the early-morning groups on 75 meters, and various single-frequency gabfests. There are technical nets, satellite operators' nets, EME round tables, vhf nets, and, of course, a multitude of local and intercontinental traffic nets, if traffic handling happens to be your *forte*.

If you don't happen to care for net-type operation, fine; there are a good many amateurs who don't. On the other hand, if there weren't any nets, imagine what the QRM would be like. There are thousands of amateurs who congregate on particular net frequencies. Since they're a member of a net, they just "read the mail" a good deal of the time. If they didn't have the net, they would be calling CQ, fishing for a new county, or active in one of the horrendous DX pileups. So, when you hear a net in operation, don't use it for a tuneup frequency. Whether you know it or not, the most hedonistic of them will stand to handle emergency traffic if asked to do so. They all do a service to the amateur community by minimizing interference with channelized communications.

Deliberate interference and incorrect identification are only two of the bad operating practices you will find on any band you listen to. You can also hear any number of stations working cross town on 15 or 20 meters when they should be on 75 or vhf fm. I have often copied W/K stations on 20 meters, running well over S9 in New Hampshire, working their neighbors. With modern linear amplifiers, it's a simple matter to turn off the big box when you don't need it.

Why the big penchant for S9 signal reports, anyway, when you can maintain perfectly adequate QSOs with S6 or S7? You may need your linear for a long-haul DX QSO or for making initial contact, but once communication has been established, 95 percent of the time you can turn your linear off with absolutely no effect on the QSO. Owning a linear is a bit like carrying an umbrella to work every day — there are times when it's a practical necessity, but just because you own one doesn't mean you have to use it all the time.

I've heard a lot of stations go QRT because of interference and poor operating practices. This is not the answer. If you hear an amateur on the air with a bad signal, not identifying properly, causing unnecessary interference, or being generally obnoxious, tactfully tell him about it. Most amateurs are gentlemen and will accept your suggestions with grace.

And, when you go on the air the next time, use operating finesse instead of brute force. Strive to be a first-class operator and encourage your friends to do the same. Let's promote good operating on our bands – discourtesy breeds pandemonium.

Jim Fisk, W1DTY editor-in-chief

LEADING THE CIC-211



THE NEW ICOM 4 MEG, MULTI-MODE, 2 METER RADIO

ICOM introduces the first of a great new wave of amateur radios, with new styling, new versatility, new integration of functions. You've never before laid eyes on a radio like the **IC-211**, but you'll recognize what you've got when you first turn the single-knob frequency control on this compact new model. The **IC-211** is fully synthesized in 100 Hz or 5 KHz steps, with dual tracking, optically coupled VFO's displayed by seven-segment LED readouts, providing any split. The **IC-211** rolls through 4 megahertz as easily as a breaker through the surf. With its unique ICOM developed LSI synthesizer, the **IC-211** is now the best "do everything" radio for 2 meters, with FM, USB, LSB and CW operation.

The **IC-211** is so new that your local dealer is still playing with his demo. Just hang in there and you can grab this new leader for yourself. ICOM's new wave is rolling in.

Frequency Coverage: 144 to 148 Mhz Synthesizer: LSI based 100 Hz or 5 KHz PLL, using advanced techniques Modes: SSB (A3J), FM (F3), CW (A1) Selectivity: SSB ± 2.4 KHz or less at -60db FM ± 16 KHz or less at -60db Sensitivity: SSB 0.25 uv 10db SINAD FM 0.4 uv for 20db Q.S.

Power Supply: Internal, 117V AC or 13.8V DC Power Output: 10W PEP (SSB), 10W (CW, FM) Size: 111mm H x 241mm W x 264mm D Weight: 6.8 kg

VHF/UHF AMATEUR AND MARINE COMMUNICATION EQUIPMEN



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"HAM_RADIO_HORIZONS," a new Amateur Radio magazine aimed primarily at the newcomer, has been announced by <u>Ham Radio</u> and will be introduced in January. Editorially the new publication will be directed toward the beginning Amateur, with low level technical articles plus general interest features for Amateurs and SWL enthusiasts at all levels. As an attraction to potential Amateurs, some CB and SWL coverage will also be included with the expectation that readers seriously interested in those fields are very good prospects for conversion to Amateur Radio. <u>Very Broad Market</u> penetration will be a feature of <u>Ham Radio's</u> new publication.

Promotion in a variety of non-Amateur Radio media is planned and emphasis will be on wide distribution far beyond the usual radio store outlets. Since it will be written for and by Amateurs, its content will appeal to most Amateurs, old timers as well as Novices, but its primary goal is to attract new Amateurs and encourage their progress up through the Amateur ranks.

Subscriptions To Ham Radio Horizons are now being accepted at \$7.00 per year; after January 1st the cost for a one-year subscription will increase to \$10.00. Ham Radio Horizons Already Has a good backlog of technical articles but it is looking for good fiction, humor, and other non-technical contributions. Prospective authors should contact Tom McMullen, WISL, Managing Editor, Ham Radio Horizons, Greenville, New Hampshire 03048.

<u>FIRST U.S.-BERMUDA TWO METER CONTACT</u> was made by WlNU/VP9 and KlHTV September 14th at 01002! Alerted to a potential opening by the AMSAT Net, Vic and hopeful stateside two-meter DXers moved to 144.090 CW and within moments the historic contact began. Vic next worked KlWHS, and before the evening ended 30 more stations, from Maine to Pennsylvania, at least one running only 100 watts to an 11-element beam, had made it across the Atlantic to Bermuda.

FCC LICENSE TIMES continue to improve, with some Amateurs receiving theirs in as little as six weeks while most CB tickets are showing up in just over half that time. Applicants whose licenses don't arrive in a reasonable time might check with their banks - John Johnston said in Hawaii that FCC is getting about 300 rubber checks each week, but very few from Amateurs!

AN UNLICENSED CW OPERATOR can operate an Amateur station under a current interpreta-tion of the rules. However, it must be with a control operator present and the un-licensed operator's transmissions logged and recorded as third party traffic.

A TVI-LESS TELEVISION SET is to be built by Texas Instruments under contract from the FCC, according to FCC Chief Engineer Ray Spence. The experimental set will provide graphic demonstration that TVI is not all the fault of the transmitter. Consumer complaints have shifted recently, however, and audio component systems have now become more of a problem than TV receivers.

PLANNING FOR WARC 79 is still very much in the news. Amateur Radio, as defined by Article 41, will not be discussed at the 1979 Geneva Conference — the proposed agenda includes only Article 5, the international frequency table. We will face problems - our own broadcasters want parts of 40, 75, and 160, and now the Canadian DOT wants to make 1605-4000 kHz all maritime and the CBC wants to shove 40 meters down to 6800-7100 kHz so 7100 and up can be devoted to international broadcast! Clearly More Supportive Work needs to be done, both with our own government and with

other governments friendly to the Amateur Radio Service.

THE "PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH ASSOCIATION" was formed in Los Angeles in early September by ten legal people who met in Jon Gallo's (WA6PTM) law offices. The non-profit organization, eventually to become the "Personal Communications Research Insti-tute," will be a coordinating body for attorneys who find themselves in legal conflicts involving the personal communications field, primarily Amateur Radio and Citizens Band. Tower Restrictions, anti-TVI/RFI ordinances, and dealings with various governmental

agencies will be the foundation's prime concerns. If funding permits, it would also

sponsor major research studies supporting the concept of personal communications. Long Term Support will be sought from both industry and individuals but start-up costs are being borne by the organizers. All are Amateurs (half with CB licenses) with experience in helping support the concept that Amateur and CB radio is a "reasonable and proper" use of an individual's home and proper" use of an individual's home.

10,000 MHZ DX RECORD was broken by two U.K. Amateurs in August when G4BRS in Cornwall worked GM30XX in Edinburgh, a distance of 323 miles (521 km). Despite the much larger U.S. Amateur population, the U.K. and other European countries seem to be much more active on 3 cm and other Amateur microwave bands.

Dentron Proudly Reveals the Secret of the New \$499.50 Super Amp



If the amplifier you're thinking of buying doesn't deliver at least 1000 to 1200 watts output, to the antenna, you're buying the wrong amplifier.

Our New Super Amp is sweeping the country because hams have realized that the Dentron Amplifier will deliver to the antenna, (output power), what other manufacturers rate as input power.

The Super Amp runs a full 2000 watts P.E.P. input on SSB, and 1000 watts DC on CW, RTTY or SSTV 160 - 10 meters, the maximum legal power.

The Super Amp is compact, low profile, has a solid, one-piece cabinet assuring maximum TVI shielding.

The heart of our amplifier, the power supply, is a continuous duty, self-contained supply built for contest performance.

We mounted the 4 - 811 A's, industrial workhorse tubes, in a cooling chamber featuring the on demand variable cooling system.

The hams at Dentron pride themselves on quality work and we fight to keep prices down. That's why the dynamic Dentron Linear Amplifier beats them all at \$499.50.

The No-nonsense Amplifier at a No-Nonsense Price \$499.50.



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ANNOUNCING AN EXCITING NEW 2-METER TRANSCEIVER FROM KENWOOD

VOL-D-SQU



Range: 144.00 MHz to 147.995 MHz Mode: FM 800 Channels: 5 KHz spaced Sensitivity: Better than 0.4 uV for 20 dB quieting Better than 1 uV for 30 dB S/N Squelch Sensitivity: Better than

0.25 uV Selectivity: 12 KHz at -6 dB down 40 KHz at -70 dB down Image Rejection: Better than -70 dB

OFF

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ONE LOW

OH

POWER



2m FM TRANSCEIVER

The TR-7400A may be used on your favorite repeater, no matter what type of squelch system is used. The continuous tone coded squelch (CTCS) may be used for both trans-mit and receive or for transmit only. Tone burst operation may also be used

SYNTHESIZED, 800 CHANNELS The phase-locked loop (PLL) frequency syn-thesizer in the TR-7400A divides the 4 MHz bandwidth into 400 channels at intervals of 10 KHz. The frequency may be offset 5 KHz higher with the push of a button, thus pro-viding 800 discrete channels.

REPEATER OFFSET

A convenient front panel switch offsets the transmit frequency of the TR-7400A up OR down 600 KHz for standard repeater operation. This offset circuit uses digital technology to provide a highly stable offset frequency without spurious response. A dual color LED

played receive frequency

OUTSTANDING RECEIVER PERFORMANCE Large-sized helical resonators with high Q minimize undesirable interference from out-side the 2-meter band. The large helical res-onators, 2-pole 10.7 MHz monolithic crystal filter, and MOSFET front-end circuitry combine to give outstanding receiver performance. TONE PAD CAPABILITY

A jack is provided to allow convenient con-nection of a tone pad to the TR-7400A. FINAL PROTECTION CIRCUIT

The final transistor in the TR-7400A is protected from antenna impedance mismatch. Excessive reflected power reduces the amount of drive to the final transistor rather than turning off the final stage. This practical fea-ture allows continued safe operation at a reduced power level whether the antenna system becomes opened or shorted.

Spurious Interference: Better than

Intermodulation: Better than 66 dB Receive System: Double conversion First IF: 10.7 MHz

Second IF: 455 KHz

BKENWOOD

MHZ ON AIR

Audio Output: More than 1.5 Watts (8 ohm load)

RF Output Power: 25 Watts (High) 5-15 Watts (Lowadjustable)

Antenna Impedance: 50 ohms

Frequency Deviation: ±5 KHz

Spurious Response: Better than

Tone Pad Input Impedance: 600 ohms Tone Burst Duration: 0.5 to 1.0 sec.

CTCS Range: 88.5 Hz to 156.7 Hz Microphone: Dynamic, with PTT

switch, 500 ohms

Voltage: 11.5 to 16.0V DC (13.8V DC nominal)

Current Drain: Less than 1A in receive (no input signal)

Current Drain: Less than 8A in transmit Polarity: Negative ground

Temperature Range: -20 to +50 degrees C

Dimensions: 182 mm (7-3/16") wide 270 mm (10-5/8") deep 74 mm (2-7/8') high Net Weight: Approximately 2.8 kg

TRIO-KENWOOD COMMUNICATIONS INC.

(6.2 lbs.)

If you haven't tried the TS-700A ... you haven't experienced the excitement of 2-meters

UN AIR

NB

CEN

PHONES

SEND

REC

POWER

OFF

MIC

TS-700A

RIT

MODE



TRANSMIT/RECEIVE FREQUENCY RANGE: 144-148 MHz MODE: SSB, FM, CW, AM

RF OUTPUT: CW, FM: more than 10W output AM: more than 3W output SSB: more than 20W DC input

ANTENNA IMPEDANCE: 500 (unbalanced) CARRIER SUPPRESSION. Better than 40 dB SIDE BAND SUPPRESSION: Better than 40 dB SPURIOUS RADIATION: Less than -60 db

Experience the excitement of 2 meters. There's more than just FM repeaters, you know. SSB DX. OSCAR Satellite, CW... and do it all with a tunable Do it all with the Kenwood TS-700A. VFO.

- Operates all modes: SSB (upper & lower), FM, AM, and CW
- Completely solid state circuitry provides stable, long lasting, trouble-free operation
- AC and DC capability. Can operate from your car, boat, or as a base station through its built-in power supply
- 4 MHz band coverage (144 to 148 MHz) instead of the usual 2
- Automatically switches transmit frequency 600 KHz for repeater

operation ... reverses, too

· Outstanding frequency stability provided through the use of FET-VFO

- 1158

111/11/11/11/11/11

153-1-

- · Zero center discriminator meter
- Transmit/Receive capability on 44 channels with 11 crystals
- · Complete with microphone and built-in speaker

The TS-700A is available at select Kenwood dealers throughout the U.S. For the name of your nearest dealer, please write.



MAX. FREQUENCY DEVIATION (FM): ±5 kHz REPEATER FREQUENCY SHIFT WIDTH 600 kHz TONE BURST TIME: 0.5-1.0 sec

E C

MODULATION Balanced modulation for SSB Variable reactance frequency shift for FM Low power modulation for AM. MICROPHONE: Dynamic microphone, 500Ω

- AUDIO FREQUENCY RESPONSE: 400-2600 Hz, within -9 db RECEIVING SYSTEM: SSB, CW, AM: Single-superheterodyne. FM: Double-superheterodyne.
- INTERMEDIATE FREQUENCY: SSB, CW, AM: 10.7 MHz, FM: 1st IF:10.7 MHz, 2nd IF: 455 kHz.
- RECEIVING SENSITIVITY. SSB. CW: S/N = 10 dB or better at 0.25μ V. 20 dB noise quieting = Less than 0.4μ V. AM: S/N = 10 dB or better at 1μ V.
- IMAGE RATIO. Better than 60 dB
- IF REJECTION: Better than 60dB PASS-BANDWIDTH: SSB, CW, AM: More than
- 2.4 kHz at -6 dB. FM: More than 12 kHz at -6 dB. RECEIVER SELECTIVITY: SSB, CW, AM: Less than 4.8 kHz at -60 dB. FM: Less than
- than 4.8 kHz at -6 24 kHz at -60 dB
- SOLIELCH SENSITIVITY 0.254V AUDIO OUTPUT: More than 2W at 812 load
- (10% distortion) RECEIVER LOAD IMPEDANCE: 8Ω
- FREQUENCY STABILITY. Within ±2 kHz during one hour after one minute of warm up, and within 150 Hz during any 30 minute period thereafter
- POWER CONSUMPTION: Transmit mode: 95W (AC 120/220V), 4A (DC 13.8V), max Receive mode (no signal) 45W (AC 120/ 220V), 0.8A (DC 13.8V) POWER REQUIREMENTS: AC 120/220V.
- 50/60 Hz DC 12 16V (13 8V as reference). DIMENSIONS: 278 (W) x 124 (H) x 320 (D) mm WEIGHT: 11 kg SUGGESTED PRICE: \$700.00

Prices subject to change without notice

16 EAST ALONDRA/GARDENA, CA 90248

wideband rf autotransformers

Design data for broadband impedance transformers using a single core

The use of transmission-line transformers wound on toroidal forms has become very popular in the last few years. These transformers serve many useful purposes, probably the most common being the transformation of balanced to unbalanced circuits and vice versa (baluns) over a relatively wide bandwidth. They were first described by G. Guanella.¹ The basic paper on the subject in this country was written by Ruthroff.²

Transmission-line transformers are restricted, however, as to available impedance transformation ratios and circuit configurations. Some of these restrictions can be relaxed by using an autotransformer instead of a transmission-line transformer, for although the construction techniques for the two types of transformers are similar, there are some very subtle differences in their operation, design, and application.

The purposes of this article are to point out the differences between transmission-line transformers and the more conventional autotransformers, and to give some design considerations for autotransformers. Autotransformers have many applications that can't be realized with transmission-line transformers, such as unbalanced-to-unbalanced or balanced-to-balanced impedance transformations, or impedance transformation ratios other than an integer squared. Some impedance transformation ratios that can be obtained with transmission-line transformers by using multiple cores can be obtained with a single core by using an autotransformer.

transmission-line transformers

The distinguishing feature of the transmission-line transformer is that the "winding" is composed of two conductors with equal and opposite currents flowing in each conductor, as in a balanced transmission line. The net magnetizing ampere-turns in the core is zero. Because of this, there is considerable difference in the means by which energy is transformed between the input and output circuits for a transmission-line transformer and an autotransformer.

This article was originally published in the February 2, 1976 issue of *Electronic Design*, and is republished here with the permission of the editor.

Quoting from reference 3 in describing a transmission-line transformer, "the inductance of a conductor is directly proportional to the relative permeability of the surrounding medium. A high permeability material placed close to the transmission line conductors acts on the external fringe field present and can magnify the inductance appreciably and thereby provide lower cutoff frequency. There is no influence upon internal magnetic fields nor upon the characteristic impedance of the line. The power transferred from input to output is not coupled through the ferrite material, but rather through the dielectric medium separating the transmission line conductors. This is an important concept for design. Relatively small cross-section ferrite material can perform unsaturated at impressively high power levels. In contrast to this, conventional transformers couple power from primary to secondary entirely through a high permeability core which must be chosen to suitably carry the total power without saturating."

With the autotransformer, the permeability of the core and the number of turns determine the low-frequency response, while the high-frequency response

fig. 1. Basic autotransformer circuit used as a step-down device, in this application $Z_{in} = k^2 Z_0$ for k between zero and 1, where Z_{in} and Z_0 are input



and output (load) impedances and k is the tap location, expressed as a fraction of the total number of turns referenced to the common terminal.

of these transformers is obtained by very close coupling, both capacitively and magnetically, between the windings. This is obtained by the twist.

autotransformers

The basic autotransformer circuit is given in fig. 1. When the transformer is used as an impedance step-down device, the relationship between the load impedance and that presented to the input terminals is given by

$$Z_{in} = k^2 Z_o \tag{1}$$

where Z_o is the load or output impedance

 Z_{in} is the impedance presented to the input terminals

k is the location of the tap (stated as a fraction of the total number of turns referenced to the common terminal).

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fig. 2. Transmission-line transformers for unbalanced-tounbalanced loads. A and B are for 9:1 and 16:1 transformation ratios respectively. (Data is from reference 3).

When using transmission-line transformers, it's necessary to have two identical windings. The tap must be placed at the center, giving a four-to-one impedance transformation. This case has been well covered in the literature and will not be considered further. Unfortunately, impedance ratios other than four-to-one are frequently required, and methods of obtaining both integral and nonintegral impedance ratios are not so well known.

unbalanced-to-unbalanced loads

Pitzalis and Couse³ give circuits for obtaining 9:1 and 16:1 impedance ratios for unbalanced-to-unbalanced loads. These circuits are shown in figs. 2A and 2B respectively. The 9:1 transformer requires two cores, while the 16:1 unit requires three cores; in these circuits, there is one bifilar winding on each core.

Because of the requirement for equal and opposite currents in the windings, transmission-line transformers are restricted to impedance ratios of $(\frac{2}{T})^2$, $(\frac{3}{T})^2$, $(\frac{4}{T})^2$ $(\frac{n}{T})^2$ where *n* is an integer. In general, the impedance transformations available with this type of circuit are



fig. 3. Method for extending the impedance-transformation ratio of an unbalanced-to-unbalanced transformer from 4:1 to about 6:1 (after Krause and Allen, reference 4). given by

impedance ratio =
$$(N_c + 1)^2$$
 (2)

where N_c is the number of cores

Impedance transformation ratios other than those obtainable from transmission-line transformers are frequently required, and so the autotransformer must be considered. Krause and Allen⁴ have given an interesting method for extending a 4:1 transformation ratio to 6:1. After the usual bifilar winding is wound on the core, a third winding is wound over the original winding, as shown in **fig. 3.** The length of this winding is given by

$$L3 = L \left[\sqrt{R_L / R_S - 2} \right]$$
(3)

where L3 is the length of the third winding

- R_L is the load resistance
- L^{-} is the length of the bifilar winding
- $R_{\rm S}$ is the source resistance

If impedance transformations greater than about 6:1 are attempted, bandwidth reductions may occur.



fig. 4. Autotransformer using a trifilar winding gives impedance step-up ratios of 1:9/4 or 1:9, depending on which tap is used.

The addition of this third winding changes the device from a transmission-line transformer to an autotransformer, since the tertiary winding has no conductor to carry an equal and opposite current. Care must be taken to ensure the core does not become saturated by the unbalanced current flow.

The characteristic of transmission-line transformers cited previously is also evident from **fig. 2**; in a true transmission-line transformer, the current flow must be equal and opposite in the two conductors on the core, just as in a transmission line. Many of the devices one sees parading as transmission-line transformers, including some to be described later, are not true transmission-line devices but are simply broadband transformers of the autotransformer variety.

It's possible to obtain transformation ratios of other than 4:1 by autotransformer techniques; these have the further advantage that only one core is needed. If a trifilar winding is made by tightly twisting three separate conductors together to form a single winding and the three conductors connected in series aiding, the circuit of fig. 4 results. This gives impedance step-up ratios ot $1:\frac{9}{4}$ or 1:9, depending on which tap is used. This device is of the autotransformer type and is not a transmissionline transformer since the currents are not equal and opposite through the individual conductors, although the construction techniques are similar and the bandwidths obtainable appear to approach those of a transmission-line transformer.

Going one step further and using a quadrifilar winding, impedance step-up ratios of $1:(3/4)^2$, $1:(1/2)^2$, and $1:(1/4)^2$ can be obtained, as shown in fig. 5, thereby increasing the flexibility afforded the circuit designer. It's difficult to say how much further the process can be continued, but the possibilities appear limited by the number of wires it's practical to put on a core. It should also be expected that the usable bandwidth will decrease as the number of windings increases.

The type of construction just described has the



fig. 5. Autotransformer with a quadrifilar winding will give step-up ratios of $1:(3/4)^2$, $1:(1/2)^2$, and $1:(1/4)^2$.

advantages of accuracy and convenience. As broadband rf transformers of the type described have only a very small number of turns, it's difficult to place a tap accurately. With the transformers to be described, the available transformation ratios depend only on the number of windings put on a core, so that miscounting a turn or two won't cause an error. The total number of turns can be selected to obtain the required inductance. The arrangement is convenient because the taps are placed at the junction of two windings, which is easily accessible. A further advantage is that the impedance transformation ratios available are the square of a rational number instead of the square of an integer, as with transmissionline transformers.

balanced-to-balanced loads

In the preceding material we've assumed the unbalanced-to-unbalanced case. When three or more windings are put on the same core, as in figs. 6 or 7, the transformer may also be used for balanced-to-balanced impedance transformations. A three-winding core is shown in fig. 6 which will give an impedance ratio of 0.111:1; a four-winding core will give an impedance ratio of 0.25:1; see fig. 7. An advantage of using an even number of windings is that the center tap may be grounded.



fig. 6. A trifilar-wound transformer that provides a balanced-tobalanced impedance transformation of 0.111:1.

It's desirable to be able to determine early in the design stage whether a given impedance transformation can be obtained with an n-filar winding with taps at the junctions or whether a tapped winding must be used. The following slide-rule algorithm will easily determine this:

Assume it's desired to match a 50-ohm coaxial cable to a 72-ohm load using an autotransformer. Set 50 on the A scale of a slide rule opposite 72 on the B scale. Now scan the C and D scales for two integers that line up; notice that 6 on the C scale is opposite 5 on the D scale (fig. 8). This indicates that a hexifilar winding connected across the 72-ohm load, with the 50-ohm cable connected between the fifth and sixth winding, will be required as shown in fig. 9. A resistive pad used to obtain the same impedance match would require a loss of 5.7 dB.

The same procedure may be used for balanced lines except that in scanning the C and D scales of the slide rule, it's necessary to look for integers separated by two or any other even number. For example, let's say we wish to match a 383-ohm balanced line of AWG 18 (1mm) wire spaced $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (12.5mm), such as open-wire TV line, to 200 ohms balanced (200 ohms was chosen since it's the impedance obtained in going from 50-ohm coax through a 4:1 balun).



fig. 7. A balanced-to-balanced impedance transformation of 0.25:1 may be obtained with a quadrifilar winding. The center tap may also be grounded.



fig. 8. Slide-rule algorithm for determining the turns ratio for matching 50 ohms to a 72-ohm load. Impedance ratios on the A and B scales show that the turns ratio should be 5:6 (C and D scales).

After setting 200 on the *B* scale opposite 383 on the *A* scale, we note that the closest integers separated by two are 7 on the *D* scale opposite 5.05 on the *C* scale (fig. 10). Because only integral numbers are allowed, an exact match can't be obtained. It is therefore necessary to move the slide slightly so that 5 and 7 are aligned on the *C* and *D* scales. This puts 200 on the *B* scale opposite 390 on the *A* scale, and will give a vswr of 390/383 = 1.02:1 (this may or may not be acceptable, depending on the application). At any rate, it's the best that can be done with an n-filar winding. If a better match is required, a tapped winding must be used. The circuit is shown in fig. 11.

A note of caution is necessary in applying this algorithm. Make certain that the proper side of the A and B scales is used in setting up the impedance ratio. In the first example above, both impedances were in the decade between 10 and 100, while in the second example both



fig. 9. Hexifilar winding on an autotransformer for matching a 72-ohm load to a 50-ohm transmission line. Circuit illustrates the tap placement in the example of fig. 8.

impedances were in the decade between 100 and 1000, so that in both cases the same half of the A and B scales would be used. If, on the other hand, you re trying to match 75 to 120 ohms (both unbalanced), you should use 75 from the left-hand side of the A scale with 120 from the right-hand of the B scale and obtain 5.05 over 4 on the C and D scales. If you mistakenly set 75 on the left-hand A scale opposite 120 on the left-hand B scale, the result would be 2 over 5 on the C and D scales, which is incorrect. This is shown in fig. 12.

I believe the above algorithm using a slide rule is more convenient to use than trying to calculate an exact turns ratio on a pocket calculator, even a programmable type. A slide rule can tell you at a glance the possible combinations that will give the desired turns ratio and how close it's possible to come if there are no exact ratios.



fig. 10. Slide-rule setup shows a turns ratio of 5:7 will match 200 to 383 ohms (approximately), both balanced to ground.

Also the more common four-function calculators won't square nor extract square roots, which you'll need to go from turns ratio to impedance ratios, or vice versa.

core configuration

One of the important parameters in the design of a successful wideband rf transformer is the core shape. Most neophytes in transformer design, including me, begin by using toroids, probably from tradition. Toroids, however, are seldom the best choice. We will, therefore, discuss the subject of core shape briefly; the following material was taken from references 5 and 6.

The factors limiting the high-frequency response of a transformer are leakage inductance and winding capacitance; these factors suggest a winding that has as few turns as possible. On the other hand, the low-frequency response is limited by the available shunt inductance, and this suggests that a large number of turns may be necessary to meet the low-frequency specifications. It is therefore of considerable practical interest to find a core shape that will maximize the shunt inductance while minimizing the leakage inductance and shunt capacity, and to rate various core shapes numerically on this basis. Such a number is called the form factor and is defined as

form factor =
$$\frac{l_w l_e}{A_e}$$
 (4)

where l_w is length of one complete turn of wire

le is effective length of the magnetic circuit

A_e is effective cross sectional area of the core

All the above factors must be in the same units, usually millimeters. The smaller the form-factor number, the more desirable the core for high frequency, broadband transformer use.

In most core manufacturers' literature, the quotient L_e^{-1}/A_e is given its own symbol, usually C_1 , so that

form factor =
$$l_w C_1$$
 (5)



fig. 11. A 7-winding autotransformer for matching a 200- to 383-ohm load.

It's of interest to consider briefly the form factor for a toroid and various ways to minimize it. This will lead to a more optimum core shape. A detailed discussion is given in reference 6, pages 265-267.

The length of a single turn of wire, l_w , for a toroid is given by

$$l_w = d_2 - d_1 + 2h$$
 (6)

where d_2 and d_1 are the outer and inner diameters of the core respectively

h is the axial length (height)



fig. 12. You must watch the slide-rule scale settings carefully or errors will result. This example shows the slide rule set to the wrong half of the A or B scales, which gives an incorrect turns ratio for matching 75 to 120 ohms.

The factor C₁ is given by Snelling⁶ as

$$C_1 = \frac{2\pi}{h \log e \frac{d_2}{d_1}} \tag{7}$$

The objective is to minimize the product $l_w C_1$; this can be done by minimizing either or both factors. C_1 can be decreased by either increasing d_2 or decreasing d_1 . However, when the ratio $\frac{d_2}{d_1} \ge 1$, increasing d_2 increases l_w , far more than a proportional decrease in d_1 so that it's desirable to make d_1 as small as possible. As only a few turns of wire are used for most broadband rf transformers, the inner diameter can usually be reduced to a very few millimeters. This results in a toroidal form quite different in shape from the usual toroid and is more often referred to as a bead.

There is a practical limit, however, as to how far the form factor may be reduced in this manner. Further improvement can be made by placing two toroids edge to edge, as shown in fig. 13, and threading turns through

		core	nominal dimensions, in. (mm)					
E-+	E-	shape type	А	в	С	D	E	facto
() B	60	1	0.525(13.3)	0.295(7.5)	0.407(10.3)	0.225(5.7)	0.150(3.8)	13.0
1		1	0.277(7.0)	0.160(4.1)	0.244(6.2)	0.114(3.6)	0.071(1.8)	14.3
		1	0.136(3.5)	0.079(2.0)	0.093(2.4)	0.057(1.4)	0.034(0.9)	14.0
		3	0.250(6.4)	-	0.242(6.1)	0.100(2.5)	0.050(1.3)	9.5
	ii ii c	3	0.250(6.4)	_	0.471(12.0)	0.100(2.5)	0.050(1.3)	8.8
		4	0.284(7.2)	-	0.218(5.5)	0.104(2.6)	0.052(1.3)	8.8
TYPE I	TYPE 3	3	0.220(5.6)	-	0.250(6.4)	0.090(2.3)	0.035(0.9)	7.8
-10-		5	0.380(9.7)	-	0.190(4.8)	—	0.197(5.0)	29.0
E-	-• E •				nominal	dimensions in	(mm)	form
					nominal dimensions, in. (mm)		(mm)	Torm
(00) B	(O)				A	в	С	facto
-			1	- B	0.138(3.5)	0.051(1.3)	0.118(3.0)	17.3
E F					0.076(1.9)	0.043(1.1)	0.150(3.8)	24.3
i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i	≩_لنا ا				0.138(3.5)	0.051(1.3)	0.236(6.0)	14.9
	å				0.138(3.5)	0.051(1.3)	0.500(12.7)	13.7
TYPE 4	TYPE 5			i i	0.296(7.5)	0.094(2.4)	0.297(7.5)	14.8
				ف لل ا	0.200(5.0)	0.062(1.6)	0.250(6.4)	15.2
					0 200/5 01	0.062(1.6)	0 427/11 01	122

table 1. Form factors for commonly used toroid and balun core sizes.

the two holes. In practice, a single core would be used having the shape shown in fig. 14. This type of core is often referred to as a balun core. A disadvantage of this core shape is that each turn must be threaded through two holes, but since the number of turns is small, this isn't a serious limitation. Table 1 gives the form factor for various commonly used toroid and balun core sizes. This data was taken from reference 5. From this table, it can be seen that the balun shape has a lower form factor than the toroid.

low-frequency response

The design of wideband autotransformers is similar to that of transmission-line transformers. Although both are relatively straightforward, some compromises must be made from a practical standpoint. For the autotransformer, the desired low-frequency response determines the number of turns and the size of the core. The low-frequency response will be down 3 dB at a fre-

fig. 13. Placing two toroid cores side by side gives a better form factor than a single toroid. The winding is through the two holes.



quency, f_1 , when the primary reactance is equal to the total shunt resistance. The shunt resistance is the parallel combination of a) the load impedance referred to the primary, b) the parallel equivalent of the generator resistance, and c) the transformer losses expressed as a shunt resistance across the primary. These are shown in fig. 15. This will occur when $2\pi f_1 L_p = R_{eq}$ where R_{eq} is the parallel combination of the load, generator and loss resistances referred to the primary. Solving for L_p gives

$$L_p = \frac{k^2 R_{eq}}{2\pi f_1} \tag{8}$$

The response will be down 1 dB at a frequency $3f_1$. Most core manufacturers publish a factor, A_I , which gives the inductance per turn (or per turns squared) or per hundred turns. In the megahertz region, A_T varies with frequency so this factor is usually presented as a curve. A_I should be chosen for the lowest frequency of interest. Using this factor and the inductance found from eq. 8, the required number of turns can be calculated. If it's not possible to wind the desired number of turns on the selected core, it will be necessary to use a larger core or a core with a higher permeability, thereby requiring fewer turns. Where wide temperature variations are possible, cores with high permeability should be avoided, as these cores also have a higher temperature coefficient than cores with lower permeability, which may cause problems at the temperature extremes.

high-frequency response

The high-frequency response is a different problem. In general, to maintain good high-frequency response, the number of turns should be as small as possible. Thus some juggling is necessary among the number of turns, core permeability, and core size and shape. fig. 14. A balun core as developed from two toroidal cores placed side by side.





design example

Transformers of this type are not difficult to wind. If you've never tried winding one before, you may have to wind two or three before you get one you like, but keep trying; analyze your deficiencies in light of the above material. When you find the right combination, you'll probably be pleasantly surprised at the performance of the transformer.

We'll close this discussion with a sample design. Let's say we want to transform approximately 5.5 ohms to 50 ohms over a frequency range of 2 to 50 MHz; the maximum power level will be 0 dBm.

The impedance transformation ratio is approximately 9:1, so a trifilar winding is required: $\sqrt{9} = 3$. With the relatively low power requirement, a small core is acceptable. I chose a Fair-Rite Products core no. 2843002802 on the basis that it had the smallest form factor. The number of turns to wind on the core is easily determined: To keep the transformer losses low, the minimum impedance presented to the lowest-impedance tap, with the secondary open circuited, should be approximately five to ten times that presented to the same terminals with the secondary loaded with its rated impedance. Since impedance presented to the lowestimpedance tap will be about 5.5 ohms when the total winding is loaded with 50 ohms, the impedance presented to the lowest-impedance tap with the load open circuited should be about 25 to 55 ohms. This calculation should be made at the lowest rated frequency of the transformer. When made for the lowest



fig. 15. Derivation of the autotranformer primary inductance in terms of the total shunt resistance, which is the parallel combination of a) the load impedance referred to the primary, b) the parallel equivalent of the generator resistance, and c) transformer losses expressed as shunt resistance across the primary. fig. 17. Response of the transformer shown in figs. 4 and 16. Load was a 5.6-ohm resistor across the lowest-impedance tap. Transformer input was from a 50-ohm generator. Output voltage in dB below 0 dBm and secondary winding phase shift are shown.



impedance tap, this calculation will determine the number of trifilar turns.

From the core manufacturers' literature for the core used, one turn will give a parallel impedance of about 30 ohms at 2 MHz, so that the transformer will require one (trifilar) turn. The three strands will be connected in series aiding. The circuit is shown in fig. 4 and a photo of the completed transformer is given in fig. 16. Fig. 17 shows the voltage across a 5.6-ohm resistor connected across the lowest-impedance tap when the transformer is driven from a 50-ohm generator. The measurements were made with a Hewlett-Packard 8405A Vector Voltmeter with a reference channel connected to the transformer input and the slaved channel connected across the load impedance.

The generator output was set to 0 dBm into a 10-dB, 50-ohm resistive attenuator. The left-hand ordinate in fig. 17 gives the output voltage in dB below 0 dBm. As the transformer has a 3:1 voltage step-down ratio, the output voltage would be expected to be -19.54 dB (-9.54 - 10 dB) below the input to the 10-dB pad (disregarding the impedance change). The right-hand ordinate gives the secondary voltage phase shift in degrees.

From fig. 17 it can be seen that the output is constant within a few tenths of a dB from 1 to 100 MHz. While this bandwidth is not as great as that obtained

fig. 16. Photo of the transformer design shown in fig. 4. Small size is key to good high-frequency response.



with transmission-line transformers, an impedance transformation ratio of 9:1 is obtained with one core and other impedance ratios are conveniently available, making the transformer useful for many applications.

summary

The *n*-filar broadband autotransformer using only a single core gives greater flexibility than is possible with transmission-line devices, thereby achieving greater economy. Furthermore, autotransformers can be used in either balanced-to-balanced or unbalanced-to-unbalanced applications. While the autotransformer as described above may not be a cure-all for a circuit designer's problem, it certainly is a versatile component in his bag of tricks.

Those interested in experimenting with wideband transformers or baluns may obtain an assortment of the various cores shown in table 1 from Fair-Rite Products Corp.*

*Fair-Rite Products Corporation, Walkill, New York 12589. Price: \$10.00 postpaid.

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*Kinetic Technology, Inc., 3393 De La Cruz Blvd., Santa Clara, California 95050. from the manufacturer's product line but which is perfectly acceptable for the applications described.

improving receiver performance

To detect a single-sideband audio signal from the i-f carrier, some form of mixer is used with a bfo signal. The products resulting from this mixing consist of the audio signals plus an additional number of signals including the bfo frequency, the i-f, and a variety of complex sum and difference frequencies. Many of these signals are within the audible range and are heard as hiss.

The chief advantage of the single-sideband signal is its narrow audio bandwidth. By limiting the audio bandwidth within the transmitter and transmitting only one of the sidebands, we can concentrate the power where it's most effective, resulting in communicable information. The transmitted audio bandwidths will vary from 1.5 kHz to almost 3 kHz; in the process of limiting the transmitted signal bandwidth, normally both the very low frequencies and those above approximately 3 kHz are eliminated from the transmitted signal. The low frequencies are limited by using only nominal coupling capacitors between various audio processing stages and restricting the bandpass with a ceramic-, crystal-, or LC-filter section. Obviously, when the received signal is detected, the high- and low-frequency components contain no intelligence and can be eliminated. While restricting the received audio bandwidth to the useful range of information frequencies, we can improve the receiver overall performance and signal-to-noise ratio.

single-sideband filter

Fig. 1 shows a very simple lowpass filter for use with single-sideband receiver systems. A number of circuits are available in the various amateur handbooks for per-

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forming this type of audio processing. Normally these circuits employ a series of toroidal-core LC sections in a variety of T or pi arrangements. This is a very effective scheme for single sideband audio filtering; however, to provide the necessary large inductive reactance, the frequency tolerance over slightly wider ranges than the prime product-line devices, but in all other respects its performance characteristics are identical.

To minimize loading previous receiver circuit stages, the single-sideband filter circuit of fig. 1 employs a



fig. 1. Schematic of the 2.5-kHz detected-audio lowpass filter for single-sideband application.

toroids and capacitors are physically quite large, and the performance curves indicate rather poor uniformity.

The circuit illustrated in fig. 1 uses an inexpensive hybrid active filter, which employs multiloop negative feedback for lowpass transfer functions. Tuning the filter frequency and selecting Q are easily accomplished by adding external resistors. U1, the FX-60 device used for the lowpass audio filtering, is a cull unit available in small quantities from the manufacturer, whose product line includes this device with very rigid parameters (and at a much higher price) under alternative part numbers FS-60, FS-65 and FS-61. The FX-60 will vary in center - high-impedance buffer stage, Q1. This stage provides only nominal gain and isolates the filter from previous receiver stages. The lowpass cutoff or rolloff frequency is determined by the two precision resistors at terminals 2 and 10 of U1 (18.2k, 1%). Using the manufacturer's relationship for determining the lowpass rolloff point, we find that

$$f_c = \frac{455(10^5)}{18.2(10^3)} = 2.5 \text{ kHz (nominal)}$$
(1)

where f_c is the filter cutoff frequency. This relationship results in a sharp rolloff of audio frequencies above 2.5



Construction of the CW bandpass filter which uses three active filter ICs. The bandwidth of this filter is 100 Hz, with a center frequency of 1000 Hz. All other audio frequencies are at least 20 dB down.



fig. 2. Schematic of the 900-Hz audio bandpass filter for CW. Bandwidth is ≤ 150 Hz with minimum relative attenuation of ≥ 20 dB.

kHz. A relative minimum attenuation of 15 dB is obtained within less than one octave; and as the frequency increases, this relative attenuation continues to increase. The overall gain of the single-sideband filter is achieved by including a simple operational amplifier, U2. The selection of a μ A741 device here is based on its internal frequency compensation and stability over the bandwidth of interest.

CW filter

Fig. 2 is a somewhat more sophisticated audioprocessing system for CW bandpass use in a receiving system. In CW reception we are normally interested in the audible quanties of the beat note resulting from mixing a bfo signal with an i-f carrier. Normally this beat note is clearest and most distinguishable at frequencies between 800-1000 Hz. Most manufacturers provide a bfo signal injection at approximately 1 kHz above or below the i-f for CW detection. This bfo signal is most often generated by a separate crystal or LC oscillator to maintain frequency stability.

Ideally we would like to pass the detected CW signal through some type of bandpass circuit that would allow only the 1-kHz beat note to be heard and that would discriminate against all other audio frequencies. Techniques for enhancing the CW beat note audio tones are described in several amateur handbooks and are similar to the single-sideband filter in that an LC system is used. These schemes rely on peaking the 1-kHz audio tone with tuned circuits of modest Q. Obviously, to provide tuned circuits at these low-frequency levels the L and C components must be physically large, which creates packing problems. Sharp bandpass filter characteristics are difficult to achieve using this LC filter method. To provide narrow bandpass features at 1-kHz would require that the LC system Q be quite high. Recall that the Q of a tuned circuit is

$$Q = \frac{X_L}{R}$$
 (2)

where $X_L = 2\pi L$ and R = reactance of the coil producing the inductance.

Since Q is proportional to L/R and both values are large for inductors usable at the CW beat frequencies, the LC filter is obviously difficult to implement and requires series-tuned circuits to narrow the audio passbnad.

The circuit illustrated in fig. 2 uses the FX-60 in a multimode bandpass arrangement whose center frequency is ideally 1 kHz with the 100-Hz bandpass. It has a minimum relative attenuation greater than 20 dB for all other detected audio frequencies.

This ideal center frequency and bandpass width can't be achieved without considerable expense. First you'd have to use the FX-60 manufacturer's prime-line device, the FS-61; secondly, all the tuning resistors from pins 2 and 10 of U1, U2, U3 in fig. 2 would have to be 1% precision resistors. The cost of such a system would be several hundred dollars. However, if you're willing to accept a compromise in the center frequency and a slight increase in bandpass width, a very high-performance CW bandpass filter can be built for one-tenth the cost of the ideal system.

Normally the FX-60 output will fall on the low side of the manufacuter's nominal center frequency, which is the reason it's a cull unit. Using the resistance values indicated in fig. 2, the center frequency would be ideally 1 kHz. Because the FX-60 units are on the low side, the actual bandpass center frequency will be between 900-950 Hz. Also because of the variations between units and the tolerance of the 5% carbon composition resistors used for tuning on pins 2 and 10 of U1, U2 and U3, the bandwidth will increase from the ideal (100-Hz) to approximately 150 Hz. As with the single-sideband filter, a high-impedance input buffer (Q1) is used, operating at unity gain. Bandpass signal amplification is achieved using a simple class-A common-emitter amplifier, Q2.

An improvement in bandwidth can be achieved in the CW filter by using matched pairs of resistors from pins 2 and 10 of U1, U2 and U3. How much improvement, of

course, depends on the accuracy of your measurements and on your patience in selecting these resistors.

construction

The photos illustrate the construction of both the single-sideband and CW filters. Each is assembled on a single-sided PC board, with all components mounted on the side opposite the etched foil pattern. Fig. 3 illustrates the relative component placement and all inputoutput points. Generous use is made of isolation resistors and bypass capacitors for both the plus and minus 12 volt bus lines of the ssb filter unit.

If the lowest practical information bandwidth is approximately 250 Hz, then the $0.1-\mu$ F interstage coupling capacitors are more than adequate, considering you can be assured they've been thoroughly tested, thus there's little chance they won't function initially. Because of their conservative design, these devices have an almost indefinite life and a very small possibility of infant mortality.

Resistors were chosen to reduce noise generation and not for power dissipation. Total power dissipation for both filters is in the order of a 100 mW, being concentrated at the output stages of both assemblies. You may substitute ¼ watt or smaller resistors without concern of thermal restrictions.

hints and kinks

Many n-channel depletion-mode, audio-type fets may be used as substitutes for the devices in the Q1 buffer



Construction of the ssb lowpass ssb filter which uses a single KTI FX-60 active filter IC. Operational amplifier (in TO-5 package, left) provides overall gain.

the high input impedance of successive stages. This same reasoning applies to the power bus decoupling capacitance (22 μ F). You can substitute lower-value capacitors freely without serious performance effects assuming, of course, that the power bus ripple content is reasonably low. The feedback control resistor for U2 is shown as a potentiometer; however, after assembly and test, a fixed resistor may be mounted permanently to the board in the space provided.

Fig. 4 shows component placement for the PC assembly of the CW filter. Note that the FX-60 is mounted to an IC socket for the single-sideband filter and directly to the board for the CW bandpass unit. I did this purposely to illustrate that either assembly method is acceptable. IC sockets are used to allow easy device removal should they be faulty at the time of initial installation or fail during use. These units are culls, so

*Undrilled boards are available from the author for \$3.00 each postpaid.

stage. The 2N5458 has a modest I_{DSS} value and if alternative devices are used, they should have the same general ratings. Units such as the 2N5459, which has a higher I_{DSS} value, will require that the source resistor be reduced to approximately 500 ohms and that a lowervalue drain load resistor be used. This drain resistance value can be obtained by temporarily connecting a pot in the drain circuit and adjusting the quiescent voltage for approximately 6 volts at Q1 drain termination. Remove the pot and install a resistor with a value closest to that measured on the pot. The CW filter output stage is a simple class-A common-emitter amplifier. Any similar circuit arrangement and device types with which you're familiar can be used, since the circuit is capacitively coupled.

Two important considerations must be kept in mind in the design of the Q2 stage. First, the FX-60 output impedance is in the order of 100 ohms and to develop maximum output voltage to the base of Q2, its input impedance should be 500-1000 ohms minimum. Secondly, in the output stage, the ac load consists of the collector resistor and the output coupling capacitor reactance together with the level-set potentiometer in parallel with the signal. If your favorite class-A circuit is used here, some adjustment may be required in the The output-level adjustment allows the filters to be used either as unity gain or preamplification gain stages. Where preamplification is not required, the feedbacklevel set on the single-sideband lowpass filter should be adjusted for about 80% or less of the maximum voltage



fig. 3. Printed-circuit layout for the single-sideband lowpass filter.

collector resistance and base bias to achieve maximum signal output levels as a result of the added loading.

Never apply power to the FX-60 without the external resistors attached to pins 2 and 10, or the internal circuits will latch and functional properties will be destroyed.

application

Table 1 summarizes the performance of both circuits. Both filters provide considerable voltage gain, which gain available. Adjustment at levels slightly below maximum will ensure good audio-signal stability, low noise, and minimum distortion.

When the CW filter is used in receivers having crystal bfo oscillators, it is necessary to first assemble the CW filter and test its performance using an external variable audio oscillator to determine the center frequency. This frequency will usually fall between 900-950 Hz.

After determining the bandpass-filter center frequency, a bfo crystal must be used whose frequency



fig. 4. CW filter printed circuit board component assembly.

may be used to supplement or replace audio preamplification stages in your receiver. Usual receiver detection systems have audio output levels between 10-100 millivolts, depending on the type of circuits used, with subsequent audio amplification. As shown in table 1, the maximum peak-to-peak output-voltage swing is greater than 6 volts, indicating that the filter may be used at any point within the receiver audio system between the detector and final audio amplifier. corresponds to the receiver i-f and the filter center frequency. As an example, suppose your receiver i-f is 455 kHz and the measured center frequency of your CW bandpass filter is 920 Hz. The correct bfo crystal frequency is then X_f = 455 kHz±920 Hz. You have two choices: 455.92 kHz or 454.08 kHz. Therefore the i-f carrier can be heterodyned from 920 Hz above or below the nominal center i-f to obtain the desired CW audio signal.

It is not uncommon for many receiver manufacturers to use a single-sideband crystal bfo frequency for CW reception. This is entirely reasonable, since the i-f pass band might be in the order of 2.5 kHz wide. The upperor lower-sideband crystal is chosen to beat with the the curves furnished by the FX-60 manufacturer and trimming the resistance values to offset the center-frequency tolerance of the particular FX-60 device being used.

The filters can be wired so that each is selectable by a



single-sideband i-f signal at ± 20 dB from the i-f center frequency. These bfo frequencies will usually be slightly above 1 kHz; perhaps 1.3 kHz in the nominal case, which is adequate for CW detection. However, these frequencies result in audio tones slightly higher than desired. It is not possible to use the CW filter circuit described here with this type of detection scheme. You must either alter your receiver bfo crystal frequency or use resistance values in the tuning of U1, U2 or U3 to move the center frequency. This can be done using

table 1. Performance summary of the receiver audio filters for CW and single-sideband.

parameter	CW filter	lowpass filter
maximum voltage gain (note 1)	≥30	≥100 (50 nominal)
center frequency	1 kHz ±10% nominal	not applicable
rolloff frequency	N/A	2.5 kHz ±10% nominal
1st octave relative attenuation	>20 dB	>15 dB
noise (note 2)	<15 mV	<10 mV
maximum peak-to- peak output signal	≤ 9V	≤ 10 V

- Voltage gain of CW filter may be increased by device and value selection of Q1 stage. Maximum possible Q1 voltage gain ≈ 10; nominal voltage gain of Q2 stage ≈ 10.
- (2) Actual noise generation depends on source-voltage ripple content indicated relative to maximum p-p output signal with input grounded.

panel switch, or each filter can be installed as an integral part of your receiver without a switch. For CW, the filters can be cascaded to attenuate high-frequency audio noise. In any event, the filters should be wired to avoid ground loops and oscillation. Isolate the PC-board ground plane from the receiver chassis and allow the dc return to enter the board at only one point.

Long leads carrying the input signal to the filter should be shielded. Ground the shield to the filter PC-board ground plane near the Q1 input and leave the other end of the shield open. The output signal may or may not be shielded, depending on the filter location, its lead length, and signal level. If output shielding is used, the shield should be terminated at the input of the subsequent stage, and the filter output shield should be unterminated. These wiring methods will avoid the possibility of introducing a ground loop and will reduce external noise pickup.

Applications of both filter units with receivers using LC bfos may be optimized by adjusting bfo frequencies to correspond to a) the filter pass band cutoff frequency in the case of the lowpass unit and b) the filter pass band center frequency for CW filter. In most cases this can be accomplished by adjusting the single-sideband bfo frequencies for maximum clarity of the received signal and by adjusting the CW bfo for maximum amplitude of the best tone.

ham radio

200 meters and up

receiving converter for low frequencies

With this two-transistor converter you can explore the fascinating world below the a-m broadcast band The story of early amateur radio has been told in 200 Meters and Down, a book authored by Clinton B. De-Soto in 1936 and published by The American Radio Relay League ¹ It makes interesting reading and establishes the background for the scientific hobby of amateur radio as we know it today.

More than fifty years have passed since radio amateurs abandoned the very-low frequencies and started to explore the spectrum above the a-m broadcast band. Just what are the longer wavelengths being used for today? The only way to find out is to listen. Considering that the World Administrative Radio Conference will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1979 and that the WARC-79 task group in this country is considering a proposal for an amateur band in the 150-200 kHz region,² it seems appropriate that the experimentally inclined amateur should be exploring the low-frequency radio spectrum.

This article presents construction information for a simple solid-state converter that can be used with any good-quality communications receiver to tune the frequency spectrum below the a-m broadcast band.

frequencies available for communications

The FCC permits the use of *nonlicensed* transmitters in certain parts of the medium- and low-frequency radio spectrum. Section 15, paragraph 15:203, permits the use of a 1-watt transmitter and a 50-foot (15.2m) antenna* between 160 and 190 kHz. Paragraph 15:204 permits the use of a 100-mW transmitter and a 10-foot (3m) antenna* in the range 510-1600 kHz, which includes the a-m broadcast band in the United States. Any transmission mode can be used on these frequencies as long as any emissions outside the band edges are suppressed 20 dB below the unmodulated carrier.

background

For the past six years ('ve been experimenting with these frequencies for communications use, and as of this writing my 189.7-kHz beacon "K" is regularly copied by an amateur in Riverhead, Long Island, New York, some 90 miles distant. My 1575-kHz beacon is copied by

*Antenna length also includes the length of any feed line.

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another amateur in Lincroft, New Jersey, 18 miles away. Not bad for ΩRP_{o} with mini-antennas!

For listening on the medium-, low- and extra-low frequencies, a good receiver is desirable. While there are many usable surplus receivers on the market, they still command a fair price and in many cases require conversion surgery. Converters for vhf and uhf are common, and the same basic heterodyne logic can be applied for the lower frequencies (see fig. 1).

The main purpose of this article is to review and update a converter described in reference 3. This converter uses two pnp transistors, one as a mixer and the other as a crystal-controlled local oscillator. It's designed to work with a receiver tuning the 80-meter band and uses a 3500-kHz crystal.

In this case, 10 kHz will appear at 3510 kHz and 500 kHz at 4000 kHz on the receiver dial. A 1-kHz frequency readout or better, depending on the receiver tuning accuracy, can be obtained through the tuning range. The only coil that must be changed is the antenna-to-mixer input coil. This coil and its tuning capacitor must provide a resonant circuit through the converter tuning range.

My Riverhead, Long Island, New York anchor man uses this converter with his Drake R4-A receiver, and his reception reports of experimenters using the 160-190-kHz band are outstanding. My receiver for the lower frequencies is an HRO5TA1. I have all the coils for reception from 50 kHz to 30 kHz. I also use a Central Electronics model DQ Q-Multiplier and a Heath panadaptor as accessories.

My type of experimentation required a receiver that I could use for portable work with a 12-volt battery, so I duplicated this converter and made minor revisions so that it would work with my Yaesu FT-101 transceiver. I was quite pleased with its performance. I am also making some experiments in the 7-10 kHz range, which the HRO doesn't cover, and the converter does a good job there as well.

tuning capacitor

The only complicated construction for this converter, as detailed in reference 3, is the rf tuning capacitor. It calls for two 3-gang variables with the stators wired in parallel. The two capacitors are mounted side-by-side using dial cords for tuning. Such construction could tax the patience of the most experienced amateur.

This problem can be resolved in two ways. One is to obtain a 5-gang surplus variable capacitor.^{*} These capacitors appear to have a total capacitance, with the stators wired in parallel, of 2000 pF. The capacitors I obtained have a 3/8-inch (9.5mm) diameter shaft. I purchased some 3/8-inch (9.5mm) female-to-¼-inch (6.5mm) male shaft reducers from Lafayette Radio (part no. 32-64165) to accommodate a common dial to mount the capacitor behind the panel.

*I obtained mine from Ralph Sanserino, 8422 Crane Circle, Huntington Beach, California 92646. A similar capacitor is offered by Fair Radio Sales, P.O. Box 1105, Lima, Ohio 45802. The other way is to use the largest variable capacitor you can obtain. If it's the common BC-set type, a rotary switch can be used to shunt fixed capacitors across the variable capacitor to increase its range, otherwise many more coils will be required through the 10 to 500 kHz range. An estimate is that, with a 400-pF variable, you'd need about a dozen coils in this case.

improved converter

I used the converter as is for some time but decided to make some circuit changes to permit more flexibility.

fig. 1. Basic converter heterodyne logic. f_1 is the desired received-signal frequency, f_2 the local-oscillator frequency. $f_3 = f_1 \pm f_2$, or $f_1 \pm f_3 = f_2$.



To achieve this flexibility, I changed the local-oscillator circuit to a Pierce type and used a Motorola HEP-802 fet transistor, which eliminated the need to change the oscillator coil to suit the crystal frequency. The mixer output coil is a plug-in type. The circuit of my revised converter is shown in **fig. 2**.

construction

Because of the large size of the rf tuning capacitor, which is 6 inches long by 3½ inches high by 2½ inches wide (15x9x6.5cm), all thoughts of miniaturization were abandoned. I made a plywood box 10½ inches wide by 8 inches deep by 8½ inches high (27x20x22cm) that contains the converter, which is built on a baseboard. The panel is black plastic, and the cover is hinged for access to the interior and also has a carrying handle. Except for the input tuned circuit, all components are mounted on a small piece of copper-foil board located on the righthand side of the rf-tuning capacitor, which is centered on the base. Sufficient space is available on the baseboard and panel for mounting coils and switches. The space on the left-hand side of the rf tuning capacitor contains an audio filter for extreme selectivity.

The secret of success with this converter is the antenna-to-mixer input tuned circuit (C2, L1, C3), which is a pi network. It must be resonant at the received-signal frequency for maximum sensitivity. Thus constant peaking of capacitor C2 is necessary as you tune through each L1 coil range.

coils and switching arrangement

The simplest method for mounting L1 is to make it a plug-in coil, or a more complex method is to mount the coil on a suitable base and wire each pie to a rotary switch on the panel. I used a combination of these methods in the converter shown in fig. 2.

On a coil-winding machine I wound a series of five pies on a 3/8-inch (9.5mm) diameter dowel.* Each pie

contains 50, 100, 150, 200, and 300 turns of 18/42 Litz wire. The winding is continuous and a tap is provided between each pie.

I used a two-gang, eight-position rotary switch wired in the following manner for L1: One gang of the switch was used in the first five positions for this coil. The sixth position was wired to a plug-in coil socket, and the seventh position was wired up through the second gang of the switch to a pair of binding posts. These binding posts permitted the addition of fixed capacitors across the plug in coil, assuring the ultimate in tuning flexibility, especially in the extra-low-frequency ranges.

A suggestion for plug-in coils, if desired, is to mount them on a dual banana plug, a common item available from most radio-part suppliers. These plugs can be stacked, so that you can use one plug with a capacitor connected across the pins, and when plugged into the permanent socket, the plug containing the coil can be plugged into the capacitor plug. This makes for a flexible arrangement to obtain various LC ratios.

checkout

After the converter has been assembled and checked for wiring accuracy, use your vom to check coil continuity and possible short circuits, such as a bad bypass capacitor. Apply power and check the local-oscillator frequency on your receiver for reliable operation. In my case, a sluggish 3500-kHz crystal (FT-243 type) would start oscillating only when I pinched the crystal between my fingers – I later found that if I placed a small value of capacitance between the Q2 gate and ground, the crystal would trigger right off. I used an Arco/Elmenco no. 120 (1-12 pF) and adjusted it for optimum performance (This capacitor is C7 in fig. 2).

The number of stations that can be heard on "200 meters and up" are too numerous to list here, but the low end of the a-m broadcast band will provide signal sources to check out the medium frequency portion of the converter. For low frequency, look for WGU-20 on 179 kHz. This is the first of several planned civil defense preparedness stations. It is located in Chase, Maryland, and gives Eastern mid-Atlantic weather reports and accurate time. There is also TUK on Nantucket Island (194 kHz) and SFI in San Francisco on 192 kHz. On extra-low frequency, various Omega navigation stations are scattered around the world (13.6 kHz).

in conclusion

The major problem when using a converter with an auxiliary receiver is fundamental frequency feedthrough. This is because the receiver is trying to do the job it was designed for, and if the converter is not well shielded and an unshielded wire connection between converter and receiver is used, feedthrough can occur if strong stations are in your area. While I have had no serious

*The Morris hand-operated coil-winding machine, complete with all gears and cams, is available from Lafayette Radio Electronics, 111 Jericho Turnpike, Syosset, Long Island, New York 11791. Catalog number 32-F-87018.



fig. 2. Schematic of a medium-, low-, and extra-low-frequency converter for use with an amateur communications receiver.

problem on 80 meters, I believe I'll have to line the inside of my wood cabinet and plastic panel with aluminum foil if I use the converter with a broadcast receiver.

A wave trap can also be used to attenuate an interfering signal. This trap is nothing more than a coil with a variable capacitor across it. The trap is placed in series with the antenna and is located as close as possible to the converter.

references

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electronic bias switch

for negatively biased amplifiers

This circuit is designed for the Heath SB-200 but can be adapted to any linear amp using negative bias voltages

Several excellent articles have appeared recently in the amateur literature describing automatic electronic bias switching of linear amplifiers. Bryant¹ published an article in QST describing the use of electronic bias switching in the ETO Alpha 77 amplifier. Also included was his adaptation of the circuit for use with the Heath SB-220 linear amplifier. Gonsior² published an article in ham radio describing his refinements of the Bryant circuit to allow for controlled rise and fall times to create a softer switching action on the bias circuit.

Realizing the importance of electronic bias switching for conservative amplifier operation, I adapted these techniques to the Heath SB-200 linear amplifier, which uses negative rather than positive bias voltages. Amplifier efficiency is enhanced using electronic bias switching, because no power is dissipated under no-signal conditions.

system operation

The Heath SB-200 is designed for linear class-B operation. During the transmit mode the amplifier output tubes, type 572B, are biased with -2 volts on the grids. This bias voltage allows 90 mA of plate current to flow under no rf drive conditions. With 2400 volts on the 572B plates, the quiescent power consumption is nearly 240 watts continuous. Thus the tubes must dissipate this power under no-drive conditions, creating heat that doesn't contribute to amplifying action. If the tubes are completely cut off when no rf drive is present the plate current would be zero. Hence, the power dissipated would be zero under no-signal conditions. This is the purpose of the electronic bias switch.

Fig. 1 is a block diagram of the switch, along with the SB-200 bias circuit. The SB-200 uses negative grid voltage to bias the tubes, whereas the SB-220 uses positive cathode voltage to bias the amplifier for linear operation. The electronic switch senses the presence of rf drive voltage and switches on the class-B bias voltage only when drive is present. With no rf drive, the tubes are cut off by a large negative voltage, and plate current ceases to flow. The electronic switch is very fast and responds to very small rf input voltages. By introducing a small delay into the switch action, a softer on-off action can be created, which results in a softer sound at the receiving end.

Fig. 2 shows the electronic switch circuit used with the SB-200. The circuit is very similar to that described by Gonsior.² There are two major differences, however, between this circuit and those published previously. First, negative voltages are controlled in the SB-200 rather than positive bias voltages. Thus, the circuit must be connected in an opposite manner to the previous designs. Second, the circuit must be connected so that the rf input has a good rf path to ground. This is the reason for the 0.001 μ F capacitor across the transistors. The negative voltages switched are about -150 Vdc maximum. The transistors were chosen to withstand

By F. E. Hinkle, WA5KPG, I/O Engineering, 9503 Quail Trail, Austin, Texas 78758 these voltages without the need for additional crowbar protection as developed by Bryant.¹ Almost any highvoltage transistors may be substituted if care is used to ensure that the maximum voltage ratings are not exceeded. These transistors are Motorola devices and cost less than \$2.00 new. The capacitor across the The circuit of fig. 2 was built on a small piece of Vector board. The board was then attached to a piece of aluminum strip about 2 inches (51mm) longer than the circuit board and formed as shown in the photo. The aluminum strip was then attached to one of the transformer-mounting screws protruding below the chassis. A



collector-to-base junction of Q1 is an integrating capacitor in the Miller feedback principle. This capacitor value may be adjusted to reduce the turn-on time of the switch.

SB-200 modifications

The photo shows the electronic bias switch as installed in an SB-200 amplifier. The location of the circuit board was chosen to permit the use of one of the wires removed during modifications. Using the following procedure, only two wires need be removed from SB-200 terminals and one wire added. No holes were drilled into the chassis, and the original circuit can be reconnected in a matter of minutes.

new nut was used to fasten the aluminum strip to the bolt. The yellow wire from the rf relay coil was then removed and attached to the pair of 56-ohm resistors as shown in **fig. 2** at *point A*. The removed yellow wire was located on the relay coil terminal nearest the edge of the chassis (lower left corner of the photograph).

The yellow wire in series with the 33-ohm 1-watt resistor located at the *Ant Relay* jack was removed next (see fig. 1). A piece of spaghetti tubing was placed over







Underchassis view of the SB-200 showing addition of the electronic bias switching circuit. Circuit board is mounted onto an aluminum strip, which is bolted to one of the transfromer mounting studs.

this yellow wire since it isn't needed. A new wire was then soldered onto the terminal from which the second yellow wire was removed. This new wire was then attached to the relay coil terminal just vacated. The *Antenna Relay* jack will now operate the rf relay coil but not the bias circuits.

A small piece of coax was then soldered between the circuit board and the rf relay contacts (*point B*, figs. 1 and 2). These contacts will have the *input* rf present on them when the relay is energized. The relay lug to which the coax was connected was the one nearest the top of the photograph, second from the top of the relay. Rf energy should be fed to the circuit board only if the relay is energized. The circuit board ground wire was attached to the aluminum strip but could be attached to any convenient ground lug.

operation

Proper operation of the electronic bias circuit is easily identified. Turn on the amplifier. If there is no rf drive from the transmitter, the amplifier plate current should be zero, indicating that the amplifier is biased to cutoff. Place the transmitter in the *tune* position. With the small amount of rf present at the output, the electronic bias switch will detect the rf and apply class-B bias voltage to the amplifier. The plate current should be 90 mA. As the rf drive is increased the plate current will increase as usual. When rf drive is removed the plate current should again decrease to zero. The amount of rf-drive voltage necessary to enable the bias switch is about 2 volts.

When the transmitter is placed in the ssb mode, with no speech, the plate current will be zero. With speech the plate current will increase in accordance with the rf driving voltage.

The electronic switch will respond to very small voltage levels, so it's mandatory that the ssb carrier be suppressed sufficiently. If an indication of amplifier plate current is present in ssb mode with no speech, the transmitter balanced modulator should be checked for proper carrier suppression in accordance with the manufacturer's specification.³

Although the circuit modification was for the SB-200 linear amplifier, there is no reason why it would not function in other amplifier designs which use negative voltages for biasing. References 1 and 2 should be consulted, however, for more insight into the operation of the bias switch and possible applications to other amplifier designs.

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ham radio



RTTY test-message generator

Tired of fighting the cumbersome old fox box? Here's a compact, lightweight replacement using TTL logic and a mos read-only memory chip RTTY buffs are familiar with the "fox box", a large, heavy electromechanical machine complete with commutator that generates the test message, "THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPS OVER THE LAZY DOG 1234567890." The disadvantages of this monster are well known, but when it came to testing a TTY machine for each function, the old fox box was a necessity.

This article describes a successor to the fox box that weighs only a couple pounds and is designed for the four popular RTTY speeds of 60, 67, 75 and 100 wpm. It generates "THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPS OVER THE LAZY DOG 1234567890 DE." Someone more ingenious could probably figure out a way to insert a call sign; this feature was not included, because this unit is normally used on a local loop with no requirement for a call sign.

A schematic of the test generator main frame is shown in fig. 1. It is designed around the MM5220DF "quick brown fox generator," which is one of a series of preprogrammed read-only memory (rom) ICs by National Semiconductor, Inc. All logic in the test generator is TTL except for the MM5220DF IC, which is a mos device. All parts can be easily obtained except the

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fig. 1. Schematic of the solid-state replacement for the old electromechanical "fox box." Design is based on National Semiconductor's "quick brown fox generator," a mos read-only memory chip. The other devices are TTL ICs.

MM5220DF. This device can probably be obtained from any National Semiconductor distributor or from Taylor Electric Company.*

circuit description

clock. This simple circuit was burgled from the Micro-TO Keyer¹ with some obvious modifications, fig. 2. It

View showing power-supply components.



delivers a very sharp negative-going pulse train, which is TTL compatible. Four series resistors and 10K trimpots set the various baud rates. The clock can be adjusted for the proper speed by connecting a frequency counter to the clock output and setting the four trimpots for the desired baud rate as chosen by rotary switch S2; i.e., 45.45 for 60, 50.0 for 67, 56.88 for 75, and 74.2 for 100 wpm.

main frame. The clock drives the binary counter chain consisting of U2-U4. U2 is connected as an 8-bit divider. In addition to feeding the remainder of the divider chain, U2 output is also fed to U5, a one-shot that provides a load pulse for output shift register U10, U11. Counters U3, U4 provide the six address lines for the mos IC. The outputs from the counters must first be changed from TTL level (positive logic) to moscompatible levels (negative logic). This is done by using gates U6, U7 and 3.0k pullup resistors. For each of the 64 different addresses, a different output word will occur, consisting of a Baudot letter or function. The mos output is buffered back to TTL level by gates U8, U9.

Parallel data from the memory is fed to shift registers U10, U11 along with a hard-wired start pulse (space) and

^{*}Taylor Electric Company, Industrial Sales Division, Post Office Drawer 11N, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201. (Latest price quote is \$18.00).



fig. 2. Clock/circuit schematic for the RTTY test-message generator. Desired baud rate is selected by the rotary switch for the four popular RTTY speeds.

two stop pulses (mark) to be run out in serial form by the clock pulses. This action produces a stop pulse slightly longer than normal. The information from the read-only memory is loaded into the shift register by U5 during the time of the hard-wired start pulse.

When reset/run switch S3 is in reset, the 7493 counters are reset to zero, and the output shift register is allowed to run in a steady mark condition. When S3 is in the run, the counters begin to count the 64 different conditions for the address lines of the ROM with the 74121 one-shot loading the shift registers with each new output from the ROM. The first two outputs produce carriage returns, CR, and the final count, 63, produces a letter shift. The counter will return to zero and start a new line until the switch is flipped to reset or until the printer runs out of paper. (Actually, the printer won't stop, which could be rough on its platen).



fig. 3. RTTY test-message generator output circuit, which is designed for standard 20- or 60-mil loops running at 100 volts minimum. Bridge voltage is high, so the M2.5A or equivalent diodes should be used.

output. The output circuit (fig. 3) is designed for standard 20- or 60-mA loops running at 100 volts minimum. It will not work with the so-called low-voltage loops. The diode bridge allows the loop to be connected with either polarity. Be sure to use diodes such as the M2.5A or equivalent, as the voltage will be high. Zener diode CR3 (5.6 volts) prevents the voltage from avalanching the opto-isolator. The opto-isolator can be an FCD-810, available from HAL.* The LEDs (optional) are for mark-space indication and are mounted on the control panel to indicate whether the system is in standby or run mode.



power supplies. Since both TTL and mos ICs are used, two power supplies are required; one for the TTL (plus 5V) and one for the mos logic (plus and minus 12V), fig. 4. For the 5-volt supply we used a 6.3-volt filament transformer. At the low-current drain of the TTL chips, the LM309K regulator works fine. However, it might be prudent to use 12 volts ac in the bridge for the 5-volt supply to make the LM309K work a little harder and provide somewhat better regulation.

The 12-volt supply, as shown, was used because it was simple. A center-tapped transformer could have been used but it would have required more components. The MM5220DF seems to be quite happy with the slight amount of ripple obtained with only 500 μ F of filter. Use good-quality 12-volt zeners to ensure proper operation of the ROM. In both supply bridges, M2.5A 1kV 2.5A diodes were used because they were available.

*HAL Communications Corporation, Box 365, Urbana, Illinois 61801.

reference

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Since 1969, the year in which TEN-TEC introduced the first solid-state HF transceiver, progress has been rapid. It was in this year that we produced the POWER-MITE which triggered the booming QRPp activity. Two years later, the ARGONAUT followed, demonstrating that Ham Radio can be more than just push-button communication.

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practical considerations in crystal-filter design

Construction and alignment techniques for building crystal filters that approach commercial standards

The principles of crystal-filter operation are well documented in the amateur literature; some excellent sources are found in references 1 through 3. In this article we'll explore the practical aspects of crystal filters, and show how they can be built with available crystals without resorting to sophisticated test equipment.

crystal selection

To the best of my knowledge only two sources of inexpensive high-frequency crystals are available: the surplus market and aviation equipment in which, until the late 1960s, crystals were used in large quantities. Frequency synthesizers have changed this situation, because today a single (or few) crystals control many different frequency channels.

The source of crystals is further narrowed because only those in type FT-243 holders should be used for the filters described here. These holders are sturdy and their construction permits convenient removal of the crystal for grinding. HC-6/U holders can't be easily opened for grinding in the home workshop. Crystals in HC-6/U holders can be used for the filters described here, however, by selecting those that will match the filter design requirements, which are discussed later. In any event, you should have a large quantity of crystals to choose from before beginning this project to ensure finding crystals that will match with satisfactory accuracy.

design example

Let's assume that a number of FT-243 crystals are

available of equal nominal frequency. A crystal filter is to be built around these crystals. Whether the filter is to be used in a receiver i-f setup or in a transceiver is another matter. I recommend consulting references 4 and 5 in advance to make sure that the crystal-filter center frequency (which sets the i-f) will lead to a conversion scheme that will be as free as possible from spurious response.

The first step in selecting the four crystals used in the filter is to make sure they're as electrically similar to each other as possible. My standard procedure is to select crystals from the same manufacturer which are designed for the same parallel capacitance of the crystal-oscillator basic circuit. By so doing, I enhance the probability of ending up with crystals that are close relatives rather than distant cousins — a precaution that makes some of the later design steps easier.

activity check

Given the same oscillator circuit, some crystals have higher output than others. Your available crystals should be classified by grouping together those of approximately equal activity. This is easily done by inserting a meter in the collector circuit of the oscillator shown in fig. 1. Higher-activity crystals will show higher meter readings.

Next comes the frequency selection of the four crystals to be used in the filter circuit of fig. 2. From an electrical standpoint, the best procedure to find the pole-zero spacing is that reported in reference 2. However, the purpose of this article is to make matters as simple as possible, so we'll resort to another method.

crystal-frequency selection

To check the crystal resonant frequency using the circuit of fig. 1, the signal from the oscillator is injected into a frequency counter. If a counter isn't available, a communications receiver with a calibrated dial will do. What is recommended in the latter case is to read the crystal oscillator harmonics at as high a frequency as the receiver can cover. If, for example, the receiver goes to 30 MHz and the crystal fundamental frequency is 5.5 MHz, the harmonic at $5.5 \times 5 = 27.5$ MHz should be used. By so doing, the accuracy of the frequency readout is improved. Keep in mind that all we're concerned

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with is the *difference* in the resonating frequency of the oscillator-crystal combination when changing from one crystal to another. In other words, it is a secondary matter for this purpose if one crystal resonates at, say, 5,501.600 kHz or at 5,502.300 kHz; what really matters is to establish *exactly* how much higher or lower the resonating frequency is of crystal A vs A'; B vs B'.

Using this technique I have observed that, for a spacing of resonating frequencies of about 1.3 to 1.5 kHz, the resulting filter bandwidth (at -6 dB) is 1.8 to 2.1 kHz. Using a resonant-frequency spacing of 2.0 to 2.2 kHz, a suitable ssb filter can be obtained with a -6 dB of 2.5 to 2.7 kHz.

Referring to fig. 2, two matched pairs of crystals are needed for this type of filter. Using the technique just described, choose two crystals of like manufacturer, like nominal parallel capacitance (for the circuit), like activity, and like resonant frequency. The last requirement is the most difficult to achieve. I consider two crystals to be matched when, after meeting the first three requirements, they resonate in the same circuit with a *maximum* difference of 25 Hz. If this criterion can't be obtained with the crystals at hand, then one of the crystals must be ground, as outlined below.

If you're lucky, or have a large selection of crystals to start with, chances are that the four crystals needed for the filter can be obtained simply by proper selection without any grinding at all. If this seems possible, even though the filter bandwidth may end up slightly different from that required, I strongly recommend using the selected crystals to avoid grinding. Crystal grinding is an extremely delicate operation that's bound to cause some disappointment at the beginning. The crystals must be matched pairs, so always start grinding the crystal of the planned pair that resonates at the *lower* frequency. The grinding operation *increases* the crystal resonant frequency.



fig. 1. Oscillator circuit recommended for checking crystal activity and resonant frequency when choosing matched crystals for the filter.

Let's pick a numerical example, assuming the following crystals are available to build the filter:

> A. 5501.267 kHz B. 5501.291 kHz C. 5502.018 kHz D. 5502.326 kHz E. 5502.120 kHz F. 5501.914 kHz

Crystals A and B differ by only 24 Hz, so they need no further processing. If they were not matched, crystal A would be ground to move its resonant frequency closer to that of crystal B. If you're shooting for a difference in resonant frequency of 1.5 kHz for example, crystals D and E are recommended as a starting point. They should



Closeup of the four crystals and coupling coil installed on the aluminum plate. Note matching resistor under plate at right. Crystals and coil can are fastened in place with epoxy cement.

be ground to resonate at (5501.267 + 5501.291 kHz)/2+ 1.500 kHz = 5502.779 kHz ±12 Hz.

grinding procedure

Begin by preparing a scratch-free glass plate about 6×6 inches in area by about ¼-inch thick ($152 \times 152 \times 6$ mm). Wet the top surface of the glass with water and

ground further. If its frequency is higher than this value, the crystal grinding was too extensive and this crystal is no longer useful for this particular filter. Select another crystal and repeat the process, reducing finger pressure and the number of strokes.

The procedure should be repeated until the crystal resonates at the desired frequency; then the second



fig. 2. Schematic of the crystal filter using two matched sets of surplus crystals, together with input and output isolating stages. A pair of crystals are considered matched when they resonate in the same circuit with a maximum frequency difference of 25 Hz.

add a small amount of abrasive powder, 400 mesh or finer (available in hardware stores). Remove the crystal from its holder and, by *gently* applying pressure with one finger, move the crystal in a circular motion on the prepared surface of the glass plate.

It is extremely important that perfect parallelism be maintained between both sides of the crystal. After a few circular strokes, turn the crystal 90 degrees, apply the same number of circular strokes, and continue until the crystal has completed a full turn (360 degrees). Try to maintain the same finger pressure during each 90degree segment of the grinding operation. Do not turn the crystal over during the grinding operation.

The ground crystal must now be washed in clean water and dried. Lay the crystal on a piece of absorbent material until all moisture evaporates. Next, clean the crystal again in a petroleum-derivative solvent; this operation ensures removal of any residual oil that may have been left on the crystal by your finger. Dry the crystal in open air and reinstall it in its original holder, taking pains to avoid touching the crystal surface with bare fingers. Use a pair of tweezers for this operation.

Check the crystal resonant frequency again, using the same original oscillator circuit and receiver setup. If its frequency is below 5502.779 kHz, the crystal must be



transformer with a slug diameter of 3/32 inch (2.4mm).

crystal should be ground until its frequency matches its selected mate. In this process, more abrasive powder should be added if necessary. Two recommendations are in order at this point:

1. As the selected frequency approaches the desired value, a single stroke in the grinding operation can negate hours of work. The idea is to proceed slowly, avoid getting tired, and try to retain a parallel relationship between both sides of the crystal during grinding. You may have to remove and reinstall the crystal into its holder many times before satisfactory results are obtained.

2. If the crystal before grinding resonated at, say, 5502.390 kHz and after grinding its resonant frequency *decreased* to, say, 5501.920 kHz, then the crystal upper and lower surfaces have become out of parallel. You can either discard this crystal and start again from scratch, or if you want to recover the crystal, its thickness should be measured and the crystal should be ground until parallelism has been restored, bearing in mind that grinding causes the crystal frequency to increase.

Grinding a crystal out of parallelism to decrease its frequency is not recommended, as crystal activity will be decreased. Furthermore, the chances of obtaining spurious response from the filter are increased.

filter assembly

Matching the four crystals in two pairs is the most time-consuming part of the project. The crystals must be assembled on a subchassis together with the coupling coil. I use an aluminum plate measuring $1 \times 3 \times 1/8$ inches (25 x 76 x 3 mm). The crystals and coil are fastened in place with epoxy cement. The coil must be bifilar wound, with as close coupling as possible. If the

coils are wound simultaneously, the connections shown in **fig. 3** should be made to obtain the desired bifilar configuration. To ensure close coupling, the coil should have a slug of the "closed cup" type, or a toroid should be used. Tuning a toroid is more critical, and that's why I prefer the closed-cup variety.

filter alignment

Different precautions must absolutely be taken if the filter is to perform comparable to commercial units. The crystals must have been thoroughly cleaned after the grinding procedure, or else the filter will perform erratically as a function of time.

The input and output leads should be as short and rigid as possible a change in length of the input and/or output leads will cause the filter to have a dramatically different bandpass response. To avoid this problem, I install the filter over a printed circuit board with isolating stages before and after the filter. By so doing, I'm assured that filter alignment will remain steady over the years and remain independent of filter application.

Whatever convenient setup is used, filter alignment can be made using different approaches. Evidently the best is to use a signal generator and a scope with a sweep system so that filter response may be directly displayed on the scope and adjusted accordingly. Since this is a rather sophisticated technique requiring some expensive test equipment, I assume that those who have a scope also know how to use it; consequently no description of this option is given. Instead I'll describe an easier alignment procedure, although it's more time consuming.

The setup of fig. 4A is recommended for the filter



fig. 4. Setup for filter alignment. The setup at A is the recommended arrangement; an alternative method is shown in B. In both cases the vfo should be stable and accurately calibrated.

alignment. If no vfo is available with the required frequency and stability output, a suitable alternative method is shown in fig. 4B.

The approximate center frequency of the filter should be determined, then filter response should be determined by varying the vfo frequency ± 3.0 kHz around the center frequency. This operation should be performed at 100- or 200-kHz increments, recording the vfo reading and the corresponding meter reading on paper in each case. If a calibrated vfo isn't available, its frequency can be determined with good accuracy by using the technique previously described for determining the frequencies of the crystals.



Crystal filter installed on a printed circuit board, complete with an isolating stage ahead of i-f (with a 3N140 transistor) and another following it (with a BF115 transistor). Pillars support the whole assembly.



fig. 5. Bandpass characteristics of a 5645-kHz four-crystal filter built by the author using the technique described in the text. Frequency differences in the two matched pairs were 6 and 14 Hz, respectively. Insertion loss of this filter was about 5 dB.

At this point four variables are at hand to achieve a) the least amount of insertion loss, and b) the flattest bandpass response:

- 1. Value of R_{in}.
- 2. Value of $C_p^{'''}$. 3. Position of the coil slug.
- 4. Value of Rout.

While the value of R_{in} and R_{out} can't be too far from 560 ohms or so, items 2 and 3 may vary considerably from one case to the next. For filters in the 5 to 6 MHz range, I've consistently obtained good results using 7 + 7 turns of no. 28 AWG (0.3mm) enameled wire for the coil. The coil form is a 10.7-MHz i-f transformer with a slug diameter of 3/32 inch (2.4mm). The value of C_p will vary between 27 and 68 pF; 39 to 47 pF is the most common value.

Fig. 5 shows the bandpass characteristics of a 5645-kHz crystal filter built recently using the technique described. The coil used in this filter has 7 + 7 turns, as described; $C_p = 39 \text{ pF}$, $R_{in} = 470 \text{ ohms}$, and $R_{out} = 560$ ohms. The passband ripple is below 1 dB and the 60/6 dB shape factor is about 1:2.1. The crystals were originally for 20 pF parallel capacitance and were ground and checked with the oscillator of fig. 1. They were considered to be matched when they displayed these operating frequencies:

$$A$$
 5644.410 kHz
 $\Delta f \approx 6$ Hz

 A'
 5644.416 kHz
 $\Delta f \approx 6$ Hz

 B
 5645.627 kHz
 $\Delta f \approx 14$ Hz

 B'
 5645.641 kHz
 $\Delta f \approx 14$ Hz

The measured bandpass at -6 dB is 1.82 kHz; two spurious responses were recorded 13.3 and 18.3 kHz above the bandpass center frequency. The insertion loss of the filter is about 5 dB.

Several distorted patterns (all of which were obtained at one time or another while the filter was being calibrated) are shown in fig. 6; all indicate that some adjustment was missing on the filter. It goes without saying that a system with four variables deserves some respect and, unless the alignment problems are properly tackled, no result will be achieved. Consequently only one parameter at a time should be varied to obtain useful conclusions.

ripple, spurious response, and insertion loss

Passband ripple can be adjusted to as low as 0.3 dB, an extremely good figure even by commercial standards. Spurious response generally appears as one or two signals some 10 or 20 kHz removed from the filter center frequency. Both responses generally show the same attenuation, about 40-35 dB below the midband signal.

Insertion loss becomes generally higher by attempting to obtain a ripple-free, perfectly symmetrical bandpass response. At any rate, I do not consider the insertion loss a critical item, as this attenuation can be easily compensated by adding an extra stage of amplification after the filter, whereas other characteristics of the crystal filter cannot be externally compensated.



fig. 6. Examples of bandpass response of improperly adjusted filters, indicating that some important step or steps were missing when calibrating or grinding the crystals or when alignment was attempted.

It must be remembered, however, that the filter response may be substantially deteriorated if the i-f strip following the filter is misaligned; I recommend checking the entire i-f response, complete with the filter, to make sure that nothing has gotten out of hand. No shielding of the filter, as shown in the photos, is necessary as long as it is operated away from high-powered stages.

acknowledgement

Thanks go to Maiso, PY2GP, for many of the observations reported and for much guidance on filter construction.

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transmission line calculations

with your pocket calculator

How to use your four-function calculator to design transmission-line matching transformers and matching stubs

As many amateurs have discovered, cut and try transmission-line adjustments can become a frustrating experience. Strange things have been known to happen when you fiddle around with different lengths of coaxial or open-wire line. When you dig out a textbook on transmission-line theory, those hyperbolic functions and associated complexities can be intimidating, to say the least! In recent years the Smith chart has been *the* engineer's tool, and those of us who were able to meet it on even terms acquired a new and different concept of transmission lines. Unfortunately, Smith charts are not the easiest things for the amateur to acquire, and although its application and use have been described in the amateur magazines,^{1,2} its mastery takes a good deal of practical use.

More recently, the computer has appeared on the scene, but few of us have access to its mysteries, so once again the average amateur is left out in the cold. However, a ray of hope has appeared in the shape of the popular hand-held electronic calculator. If you will compromise to the extent of a book of trigonometric tables, the humble four-function calculator can do a pretty good job of coming up with the answers. Where do you locate that matching stub or transformer? If your handy-dandy device is sophisticated enough to do trig functions as well, you won't even need the trig tables!

To begin at the beginning, consider a length of transmission line, of characteristic impedance Z_o , terminated by a mismatched load having a resistive component, R, and a reactive component, X (see fig. 1). If you now refer to the Smith chart of fig. 2, you will see that it has a scale around its circumference which is labeled "Angle of Reflection Coefficient in Degrees." You will also see that a set of rectangular coordinates has been superimposed on the Smith chart. The locus of all the centers of reactance circles has become the X axis, while all of the centers of resistive circles are located on the Y axis. This allows us to express Smith chart functions in simple trigonometric terms, and eliminates the complex j operator, which the simple pocket calculator cannot handle.

This article will show how, given a complex load of R + jX (or G + jB), appropriate points may be computed where either a suitable matching transformer or shunt stubs may be located to match out the transmission line.

By Henry S. Keen, W5TRS, Fox, Arkansas 72051



fig. 1. Transmission line terminated with a complex load. Design of matching transformers or matching stubs, and their proper location, may be determined with a Smith chart, or by using the simple four-function calculator, as discussed in the text.

In addition, a general relationship will be given, with which the impedance (or admittance) resulting from looking at a known complex load through a given length of transmission line may be determined.

It may also be determined from the Smith chart that as you back off from the load, moving toward the generator (transmitter), that the angle of the reflection coefficient will be *reduced* as you recede toward the generator.

There are two general methods of matching a mismatched transmission line to eliminate standing waves. The first is to insert a matching transformer (usually a quarter wavelength of line, of a different characteristic impedance than the line to be matched). The second, which is more adaptable to coaxial lines, is to install a shunt stub at the proper spot on the line.

The location for a matching transformer, if you are using open-wire lines, is quite simple as you only have to run a neon lamp along the line to locate a voltage minimum or maximum. These are points where the reactive component is zero. If plotted on a Smith chart, this impedance would fall upon the "real" diameter, which is marked as the Y axis in fig. 2. At this point you would cut the line and insert a matching transformer having a transformation ratio equal to the square root of



fig. 2. Smith chart with superimposed rectangular coordinates (see text).

the vswr. Whether its characteristic impedance would be higher or lower than the main transmission line depends upon whether you had chosen a minimum or a maximum voltage point.

With coaxial lines, however, you cannot detect voltage maximums and minimums as you move a neon lamp along the line, so all points have to be computed, based upon knowledge of the complex impedance of the load. Bridges for measuring such complex quantities have been fairly well covered in the literature, and need not be discussed here.^{3,4}

transformer location

Starting with the load impedance of $R_o + jX_o$ you must first normalize the load by dividing both the resistance and reactance of the load by the characteristic impedance of the line. Thus, 30 + j60, normalized to 50 ohms, for example, would be 30/50 + j60/50 = 0.6 + j1.2.

Secondly, you must find the angle of the reflection coefficient, θ , using the relationship

$$\tan\theta = \frac{2X}{R^2 + X^2 - 1} \tag{1}$$

In this usage, whenever X is positive, θ also is positive, and when X is negative, θ is negative, as on the Smith chart. When the denominator is positive, θ lies between zero and 90°, and when the denominator is negative, θ lies between 90° and 180°.

In the case of our assumed impedance of 0.6 + j1.2, for example;

$$\tan \theta = \frac{2(1.2)}{0.36 + 1.44 - 1} = 3$$

Therefore $\theta = 71^{\circ}34'$

Inasmuch as the length of line included affects both the incident and the reflected wave, the transformer should be located $35^{\circ}47'$ (half of $71^{\circ}34'$) back from the load. Such accuracy as represented by the 47' is unnecessary for any amateur operation, but it's nice to know that you can figure it that closely (assuming, of course, that you accurately measure the load impedance). This is a point of low impedance (0°). If you wanted to locate the transformer at a high impedance point, it would be located an additional 90° back from the load.

The vswr represented by this load may be calculated by first finding the reflection coefficient, Γ from the following expression:

$$\Gamma = \frac{2X}{\left[(1+R)^2 + X^2\right]\sin\theta}$$
(2)

Solving eq. 2 for the example above

$$\Gamma = \frac{2(1.2)}{[(1+0.6)^2 + 1.2^2] \sin 71^\circ 34'}$$
$$= 0.63245$$

The corresponding vswr is

$$vswr = \frac{1+0.63425}{1-0.63425} = 4.44$$

Therefore, the transformation ratio would be $\sqrt{4.44}$ or about 2:1.

When coaxial transmission line is used, you rarely have the chance to select the characteristic impedance of a matching transformer, so the matching must usually be accomplished by means of shunt stubs, which can be calculated in the following manner: Convert the complex admittance $R_o + jX_o$ to the admittance form, as follows, using the normalized resistance and reactance

Conductance,
$$G_o = \frac{R_o}{R_o^2 + X_o^2}$$
 (3)

Susceptance,
$$B_o = \frac{X_o}{R_o^2 + X_o^2}$$
 (4)

In transferring from impedance to admittance, the sign changes, so that $R_o + jX_o$ becomes $G_o - jB_o$ (and $R_o - jX_o$ becomes $G_o + jB_o$). This is because inductance is considered a positive reactance, while inductive susceptance is negative.

stub matching

1. Using the admittance counterpart of eq. 1 find θ from the expression

$$\tan \theta = \frac{2B_o}{G_o^2 + B_o^2 - 1}$$
(5)

2. Using the admittance counterpart of eq. 2, find Γ from the expression

$$\Gamma = \frac{2B_o}{[(1+G_o)^2 + B_o^2]\sin\Phi}$$
(6)

3. The admittance must move down the transmission line to a point where $G_1 = 1.0$, at which point the new value for *B* may be found from

$$B_1 = \pm \frac{2\Gamma}{\sqrt{1 - \Gamma^2}} \tag{7}$$

Substitution of this new value of susceptance, B_1 , with G=1 in eq. 5 will give the value of θ at the location for the stub. If B_1 should be positive, the added stub will be negative (inductive). You can choose either type of stub, but the widest bandwidth will be obtained when you choose the point closest to the load.

As an example, let's return to our original assumed load impedance which normalized to 0.6 + j1.2.

From eq. 3
$$G_o = \frac{0.6}{0.6^2 + 1.2^2} = \frac{0.6}{1.8}$$

= 0.333
 $B_o = \frac{1.2}{0.6^2 + 1.2^2} = \frac{1.2}{1.8}$
= 0.667

Therefore, the admittance equivalent is 0.333 - j0.667

From eq. 5
$$\tan \theta_o = \frac{2(-0.667)}{0.333^2 + 0.667^2 - 1}$$
$$= \frac{-1.333}{-0.444} = 3.000$$

from which we deduce that θ_o is negative (B_o is negative) and that θ_o is between -90° and -180° (denominator is negative).

The value of θ_o is therefore $-180^\circ + 71^\circ 34' = -108^\circ 26'$

The reflection coefficient, Γ , has not changed from previous calculations and is still 0.63245. When this value is used in eq. 7

$$B_1 = \pm \frac{2(0.63245)}{\sqrt{1 - 0.63245^2}}$$
$$= \frac{1.2649}{\sqrt{0.600}} = 1.633$$

Therefore, the nearest point to the load, where a shunt stub could be located, is where $Y_1 = 1.0 + j1.633$. Consider clockwise rotation on the Smith chart from -108°26', so applying eq. 5 again, using these figures,

$$\tan \theta = \frac{2(1.633)}{(1.0)^2 + (1.633)^2 - 1}$$
$$= 1.2247$$
$$\theta = 50^{\circ}46'$$

Therefore, the total distance will be $(180^{\circ} - 108^{\circ}26') + (180^{\circ} - 50^{\circ}46') = 200^{\circ}48'$ This will require a length of line half that, or $100^{\circ}24' (0.2789 wavelength)$.

Since B_1 is positive, the stub must be inductive and present a shunt susceptance equal to -1.633. The stub length is determined from

The characteristic impedance of the stub is assumed to be the same as the main transmission line.

If you had wanted to use a capacitive stub (or a shunt capacitor), you'd have chosen B_1 to be -1.633, which would have placed the new value of θ_1 as $-50^{\circ}46'$, and would have called for a length of 0.4247 wavelength between the load and the shunt susceptance.

general relationship

When a given normalized complex admittance, Y_L , is to be translated a distance θ (in electrical degrees) down a line of admittance Y_{ρ} , the classical formula is

$$Y_1 = \frac{Y_L + j \tan \theta}{1 + j Y_L \tan \theta}$$
(8)

This relationship looks innocent enough, but when Y_L is complex to begin with, then you must, after expanding and combining terms, also rationalize the denominator. There are numerous pitfalls which can trip up the unwary (when I used this expression, I always checked the results on a Smith chart just to be sure).

However, the same translation of a complex admittance can be accomplished in the following manner:

Given: $Y_L = G_L + jB_L$ (or $Z_L = R_L + jX_L$)

to extend the transmission line by θ degrees and find Y_1 (or X_1)

1. From eq. 5, find θ_o (or use eq. 1 for Z)

2. From eq. 6 or eq. 2 find Γ

3. Subtract the quantity 2θ from θ_{ρ} , giving θ_{1}

4. Find
$$X_1 \doteq \Gamma \sin \theta_1$$
 and $Y_1 = 1 - \Gamma \cos \theta_1$ (9)

5. Calculate

$$G_1 = \frac{2Y_1}{X_1^2 + Y_1^2} - 1 \quad (or \ R_1)$$
(10)

$$B_1 = \frac{(1+G_1) X_1}{Y_1} \quad (or X_1) \quad (11)$$

substitute R_1 for G_1

I feel that this process is not as messy as eq. 8, in addition to being compatible with the pocket calculator, particularly those which have trigonometric capability. It may be that some or all of these steps might be programmed on the more sophisticated HP-25 or HP-65 calculator, which would make the process a breeze.

Another application of these relationships might be to translate the impedance of an antenna, as measured through a length of coaxial cable, *back* up to the antenna itself. In such an application, the length of the coaxial line in electrical degrees must be accurately known for each frequency of measurement.

When moving *toward* the load, instead of away from it, as was done in the foregoing discussion, twice the electrical length of the line through which measurements are taken must be *added* to the calculated angle of the reflection coefficient. Integral half wavelengths (180°) of line, which result in a complete revolution on the Smith chart, would of course be discarded. Therefore, if you neglect losses in the transmission line, the electrical characteristics of the antenna might be determined to a fair degree of accuracy without disturbing the electromagnetic field around it. The use of a carefully measured and known length of coaxial line for this purpose would be most helpful. A standard test line should be of considerable value to the antenna experimenter as a primary piece of test equipment.

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ham radio



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Hank Olson, W6GXN

power-supply servicing

Probably the most common service job in electronic equipment involves the power supply. The power supply in amateur equipment is usually connected to the 110or 220-volt ac line through switches, fuses, or circuit breakers. This connection is a significant interface between your equipment and the real (and imperfect) world. If your power supply is not connected to a source of perfect sine-wave power, then you can expect problems, especially if the supply is used to power solid-state equipment. In this month's column we discuss a number of power supplies and voltage regulators and how to troubleshoot problems that may develop — what to look for, how to isolate faults, and how to make repairs.

line-voltage transients

The most common power-supply problems don't occur from plugging the supply into a source of the wrong line voltage; such errors usually result in an open primary fuse or open circuit breaker, which is easily fixed. A more important problem occurs from lineoriginated transients, which cause the input voltage to depart from a pure sine wave. A line-voltage transient can be a positive high-voltage spike riding on the mostpositive excursion of the 60-Hz sine wave (fig. 1). The duration of this spike is very short, so it doesn't contain enough energy to open a fuse or trip a circuit breaker. However, it can appear on the power-transformer secondary winding (if the transformer has sufficiently high frequency response) and result in overvoltage on one or more of the rectifiers.

Overvoltage occurs when the rectifier peak inverse voltage (PIV) exceeds the rectifier rating. In tube recti-

By Hank Olson, W6GXN, Post Office Box 339, Menlo Park, California 94025 fiers this is called flashback; in modern silicon rectifiers it's usually called destruction! Some silicon rectifiers (more expensive types) are made to recover from lowduty-cycle overvoltage; these are the "avalancheprotected" variety. Because they're more expensive, you probably won't find them in your commercial amateur equipment. Some of the principal makers of these avalanche-protected diodes are Semcor, Unitrode, and Varo. What you're most likely to find in your commercial gear is the 1N4001-1N4007 series or something similar, which are not protected and which are worth about 5 cents each in OEM quantities. If they fail, you may not find these rectifiers in your equipment except for their wire ends; the package will have disintegrated into small black granules rattling around in the bottom of the equipment case.

If the above seems overstated, it was because I wanted to make a point: by far, the most common fault in power supplies is rectifier failure. In modern circuitry using silicon rectifiers, the diodes will most often be shorted; the only open-circuited rectifiers I've seen are those resulting from package fracture or disintegration.

typical circuits

To troubleshoot power supplies, we must first know what circuits might be encountered. In fig. 2 are seven common rectifier-filter configurations, all using capacitor-input filters. The first is the simple half-wave rectifier, which is the least expensive, but which produces 60-Hz ripple (making filtering more difficult). The second is the full-wave rectifier, which requires a centertapped transformer. The third is the full-wave bridge, which requires no center tap but which requires four rectifiers. The conventional voltage doubler is shown next, followed by the cascade voltage doubler. The fullwave, full-wave bridge, and conventional voltage doubler all produce dc output with 120-Hz ripple. The cascade voltage doubler produces 60-Hz ripple very much like the simple half-wave circuit.

The last two circuits of fig. 2 are variations on the full-wave bridge. The circuit in fig. 2F produces both positive and negative voltages (as in power supplies used



fig. 1. Representation of a 60-Hz line-voltage wavetrain with a transient spike, which can cause overvoltage on power-supply rectifiers.

for operational amplifiers). Looking at this circuit carefully, we see that it boils down to simply a positive and a negative full-wave rectifier operating from the same center-tapped transformer. The other full-wave bridge, fig. 2G, is the dual-voltage version. It produces *half* the dc output at the transformer center tap as produced at Power supplies that do have a central regulator, however, generally use some sort of series circuit, much like those in fig. 4. Figs. 4A and 4B show the positive and negative versions. The negative regulator works in exactly the same way as the positive regulator and will be more common in older designs that used germanium



the plus terminal of the bridge. This supply is similar to that of fig. 2F but with a different point grounded.

Seven rectifier-filter circuits with typical component values, together with plots of voltage and current output, are shown in fig. 3. The graph of fig. 3H shows that wide variations occur in the output of the different circuits even though the same transformer and filtercapacitor values are used. Although choke-input filtering is not too common in modern commercially built amateur gear, it's possible to use such filtering with the full-wave and full-wave bridge rectifiers. Typical examples are shown in figs. 3F and 3G.

voltage regulators

Following the rectifier-filter section there will frequently be no signal regulator, because many circuits in commercial electronic equipment are not very sensitive to voltage variations. In a typical receiver, for instance, the only stage that may use regulated +Vcc is the local oscillator. In even the best and most expensive designs, the audio output stages are operated from unregulated +Vcc.

fig. 2. Typical power-supply circuits. A, B, and C depict half-wave, full-wave, and bridge rectifiers using capacitive-input filters. A conventional voltage doubler in D and a cascade voltage doubler in E. Variations of the bridge are shown in F and G, the former producing both positive and negative voltage and the latter producing half the dc output at the +low terminal as produced at the +high terminal.

power transistors. The only differences between the designs are that, in troubleshooting the positive regulator, one measures positive voltages to common; in the negative regulator, one measures negative voltages to common. The other major difference, when fixing older germanium designs, is that the base-emitter forward voltage is closer to 0.3 volts whereas it's about 0.6 volt for silicon transistor designs.

Perhaps the simplest series regulator design is the emitter-follower, shown in fig. 5A. In this case no separate feedback of the output voltage to the control section is used, but it is assumed that the base-emitter voltage is more or less constant. The base is held at constant voltage by the zener diode, and ripple at the base is reduced by the filter formed by R1, C1. The next most-complex series regulator is shown in fig. 5B, where feedback is used from the output. A fraction of the output voltage is fed to Q2 base. The difference between this voltage and the zener diode voltage (plus the emitter-base forward drop of Q2) is amplified to control Q1 base. The third most-complex regulator uses a differential amplifier as a control circuit with one side refer-

enced to a zener and the other to a fraction of the output voltage. This circuit is shown in fig. 5C; note that a second zener is usually used to provide coarse regulated voltage to the differential pair.

IC op amp regulators

At this point it is advantageous to substitute an operational amplifier for the differential pair. Many

Q1 base in a negative direction. This action prevents further current being passed by Q1. If Q2 were a germanium transistor R2 would have to be about 3 ohms to allow current limiting at 100 mA, again because of the lower base-emitter forward drop of germanium transistors.

In the next generation of linear ICs the voltagereference and current-limiting functions and even a small



commercial regulators that were designed shortly after monolithic IC amplifiers became available are of the form shown in fig. 6.

In fig. 7 are actual circuits of the regulators discussed above. Note that in fig. 7D a current limiter has been added consisting of Q2, R1, and R2. (Compare with fig. 6). This feature can be added to most regulators and is certainly worthwhile. When 100 mA is drawn, 0.6 volt is developed across R2, causing Q2 to conduct, which pulls series-pass transistor were integrated into the regulator chip. National's LM300, Fairchild's μ A723, and Motorola's MC1460 are representative of this first generation of IC regulators. In their small TO-5 packages these regulators could handle currents of only 10 mA or so, depending on the input-output voltage and the adequacy of the heat sink. These ICs can be used with external power transistors to provide regulators with *amperes* of current capability. **Fig. 8** shows circuits using these ICs with external transistors as combined regulators. The LM300 has since been replaced by the improved version, LM305, and the MC1460 has also been replaced by the MC1469. The μ A723 and LM305 are widely second-sourced, so you may find them with any number of brand names.

Finally, in the second generation of IC regulators, manufacturers have succeeded in putting even the power transistors onto the chip. Such regulators are typified by the Fairchild μ A7800 and National LM340 series of three terminal regulators, in power packages. These ICs have fixed output voltages; you simply buy the voltage type desired. The negative three-terminal regulators. μ A7900 and LM320 series, operate in similar fashion. Of course, since there is no user control of output voltage or current limiting on any particular three-terminal regulator, there is also nothing to repair once the input, output, and ground connections are checked for proper connections and voltages; IC replacement is the only remaining option. The use of three-terminal regulator ICs is shown in fig. 9. Note that a small capacitor is necessary between input and common for stability.

troubleshooting and repair

Preliminary checks. Now that we've covered at least a fair number of rectifier-filter and regulator circuits most likely to be encountered, let's move on to fixing them. It is perhaps superfluous advice, but your first check should be to see if line voltage is actually entering the equipment under repair. Line cords, especially the molded variety, are frequently open (and occasionally not plugged in). Next, fuses and breakers should be checked; even if they appear OK, check them with an ohmmeter. Apparently good fuses can occasionally open in a way that will be missed by a visual check. If new fuses immediately blow, then you must resist the temptation to use much-larger-than-normal fuses to "get things going." Such overriding of the fuse function, even for "a short time during servicing," will usually



fig. 4. Series regulators. Positive and negative versions are shown in A and B. The negative regulator is more common in older designs using germanium power transistors.

cause severe damage to some component that may be hard to replace — such as a specially made power transformer.

Rectifiers. The next step is to check the rectifier diodes using an ohmmeter; as mentioned before, these are the most likely candidates for failure. It is easiest to disconnect one lead of each rectifier before applying the ohmmeter test, otherwise the dc resistance of the power



fig. 5. Simple emitter-follower series regulator, A, in which base-emitter voltage is held constant by a zener. In B, a fraction of the output voltage is fed back to Q2, a dc amplifier, to control the base of Q1. The series regulator in C uses a differential amplifier, Q2, Q3, as part of the control circuit.

transformer secondary can confuse the issue. If a bad rectifier is found, replace it with a new part or equivalent. The Motorola "HEP Cross Reference Guide and Catalog" is the best of the several replacement handbooks in this area, in my experience. My advice is to replace all the diodes in a full-wave or a full-wave bridge rectifier (unless you have an *exact* replacement) if only one rectifier diode is shorted. In this way, the original balance of diodes is maintained. The required PIV in the replacement diodes should be twice that of the originals to ensure reasonable reliability.

Such diodes are very inexpensive. As an example, consider a full-wave rectifier with capacitor input and an output voltage (unloaded) of 15 volts. You could get away with using a nominal 50-volt PIV diode such as the 1N4001 and still have a 10-percent margin of PIV before breakdown. A 1N4001 costs 32 cents (1976 Allied

Radio Catalog), and a 1N4002 costs 33 cents. The difference is one cent in price, but this one cent buys you double the PIV (100 volts). It certainly is a worthwhile penny spent! Diodes (up to about 15 amps) are so cheap because of wide consumer use — it's ridiculous to pinch pennies on PIV.

Transient suppressors. After replacing rectifier diodes in a power supply, should a repetition of the failure occur in a few weeks or months, it may be wise to add something to suppress line transients. A 0.01- μ F 1kV disc capacitor across the transformer secondary will do a lot to suppress short-duration spikes for example. An even more effective spike reducer is a thyrite varistor of the correct voltage. Disc and rod varistors are rated in voltage (for both ac and dc) by their manufacturers. These components may also be connected across the transformer secondary. Such thyrite varistors are made by General Electric, National Lead, and Automatic Electric.

The varistors have the advantage of *dissipating* the transient as opposed to the capacitor, which integrates the transient energy into a lower voltage, longer impulse. In power supplies using choke-input filters, a thyrite varistor may be used as in fig. 10 to prevent the choke-field collapse voltage from exceeding the rectifier diode PIV when the power supply is turned off.

Load circuitry. After the rectifiers have been given a clean bill of health, disconnect the regulator output from the circuit that it is designed to power. A failure in the circuitry that loads the regulator can give the appearance of a regulator failure, especially if the regulator has built-in current limiting. If low output voltage still occurs, the regulator input voltage should be checked. If the regulator input voltage is low, disconnect the rectifier-filter output from the regulator input. This allows the rectifier-filter to operate unloaded, and its output voltage should increase at least to nominal voltage when turned on. We have now three different system blocks where an apparent power-supply problem can occur: rectifier-filter, regulator, and load circuitry. By disconnecting these blocks from each other in steps, the faulty section can be isolated and fixed.

filter capacitors

If the trouble is in the rectifier-filter section, the most



fig. 6. Series regulator using an op amp IC. Circuit is typical of many commercial designs that appeared after monolithic IC op amps became available.



fig. 7. Series regulator circuits of figs. 5 and 6 using typical components. The emitter-follower version is shown in A; simple series regulator, B; series regulator using differential dc amplifier, C; and a series regulator using an IC op amp as a differential amplifier, D. The current limiter consisting of Q2, R1, R2 in D is a simple and worthwhile addition that can be included in most regulators.

probable failure (after rectifier diodes) is an electrolytic filter capacitor. The failure of electrolytic capacitors can either be a short or open circuit. A shorted electrolytic can be easily found with an ohmmeter; the only indication of an open electrolytic is its failure to smooth out ripple. Such an open-circuit failure will cause the dc voltage to decrease to a value lower than the peak ac voltage, as read on most meters.

An oscilloscope readily shows an open filter capaci-



fig. 8. Series regulators using ICs especially designed for the purpose. All use external power transistors as part of the regulator circuit. The regulator in A uses the National LM300H or its improved version, the LM305H. In B the Fairchild μ A723 is used. C shows another version using a Motorola 1460G, which has since been replaced by the MC1469. The National and Fairchild devices have become widely second-sourced and appear under a variety of brand names.

tor, because the increased ripple can be seen immediately. Bridging a new (correct value) electrolytic across the suspected open capacitor is a simple way to check this problem. What causes most electrolytic open failures is excessive ac. This current causes heat and subsequent drying of the capacitor electrolyte. If you have a supply in which electrolytes consistently dry up, probably no thought had been given to limiting ac current in the capacitor in the original design. This was a rare problem when we had only tubes and selenium rectifiers because of their high equivalent series forward resistance. But the modern silicon rectifier diode has extremely low equivalent forward resistance and immense peak current capability. A typical 1N4001 rectifier, rated at 1 amp, has a peak current rating of 30 amps!

With essentially no limit to the peak current our modern rectifiers will handle, the only limitations on ac in the filter capacitor, in a capacitor-input rectifier-filter system, are the leakage inductance and secondary resistance of the power transformer (plus the equivalent series resistance of the electrolytic itself). By using a clamp-on ac ammeter on the filter-capacitor lead you can easily see the magnitude of this current. The solution is either to use a capacitor of higher current rating (expensive and relatively bulky) or to add a small resistor, as in fig. 11. One-ohm, half-watt resistors are common and inexpensive for this purpose. For dc to 500 mA, this protective resistor will decrease the output less than 0.5 volt, which will usually be tolerated by the circuitry (regulator or load) that follows the rectifier filter. For larger-current supplies, a smaller resistance made from nichrome or constantin wire should be used. Note that the *exact* resistance and its stability are unimportant here as long as the resistance limits the ac current to a value the filter capacitor can accept according to its ratings.

magnetic components

The only other components in the power supply are the power transformer and perhaps a filter choke. These components usually fail from long-time overload or just plain old age and will have been "cooked." Obvious evidence of their demise includes strong odor, charred paper insulation, darkened insulation on formvar winding wire, and leaking insulation oil from sealed units.

Ohmmeter checks for winding continuity and leakage paths to the frame are called for here. Also ac voltage measurements across the power transformer secondary are appropriate. If all seems well in the rectifier-filter section, then the supply may be loaded using appropriate power resistors or light bulbs to determine if failure occurs only under load. The transformer alone may also be checked under resistive loads in the same way.

regulators

If you have problems in the regulator section, fixing becomes more varied and interesting. It can be very



fig. 9. Using a three-terminal device as a positive regulator, A, and as a negative regulator, B, the power transistor is included within the chip. The IC for A can be a National LM340 or Fairchild μ A7800; for B is can be a National LM320 or Fairchild μ A7900. The capacitor between input and common is used for stability.

simple if the regulator is one of the three-terminal types, in which case the regulator is simply replaced. Regulator failures in my experience fall in this order of probability: series-pass power transistor, regulator IC, small transistors, and small electrolytics. Since the regulator is a feedback system, voltage measurements are often misleading. Unlike open-loop circuits, feedback systems usually completely tie themselves into knots when any part of them goes wrong.

The easiest way to fix a regulator is to check (or replace) the most likely parts (as above), one at a time, until success is achieved. Two voltage measurements can be helpful — sometimes: measurement across the current-sense resistor and across the reference. In fig. 7D this would be across the 6-ohm resistor for current-limiting; any voltage here in excess of 0.6 volts indicates that the regulator is current limiting. Also in fig. 7D, a check across the zener (1N4611) will show if the regulator has any reference voltage to which it can compare the output voltage.

Reference-zener failure doesn't occur often in good commercial designs, but a number of companies use inexpensive plastic transistors as reference diodes. The reverse breakdown voltage of the emitter-base junction of a silicon transistor is used for a zener in the 4-10 volt range. These "reference diodes" are inexpensive for the manufacturer but nasty to replace, because the repairman has no idea of their exact breakdown voltage before failure. My practice is to use a good zener with a sharp knee to replace these so-called references. The 1N4099 at 6.8 volts is my favorite at least as a first cut.

mysterious part labeling

When fixing commercially made power supplies you may encounter that annoying facet of protectivism called "in-house-numbering." For example, Motorola makes an MC1466L for Lambda to use in their modular power supplies but gives it a Lambda special number. There is no way you can find out from the IC manufacturer what the part is - short of industrial espionage. All



fig. 10. Choke-input circuit with a thyrite varistor added to protect rectifiers against overvoltage when the choke field collapses.

IC manufacturers do this for large O.E.M. customers. However, the IC manufacturer usually puts his trademark on the IC or transistor so that at least you have a clue.

There is almost zero probability that an in-house semiconductor is a specially-made device because of the cost factor; almost always it will be a standard part but re-marked. The circuit and pinning of the device to be replaced should be compared with the information in the semiconductor manufacturer's data book, then usually you can infer what the part is. In modular power supplies the Fairchild μ A723 and National LM305 are by far the most common regulator ICs.

The main producers of regulator ICs are Fairchild, National, Motorola, Silicon General, Raytheon, Tele-



fig. 11. Capacitor-input filter with a 1-ohm resistor added to limit electrolytic-capacitor current.

dyne, Signetics, and RCA (that is, all the big linear houses). These companies' trademarks are easily recognized and their data books are commonly available. Occasionally you may be able to obtain an in-house number equivalent by calling the O.E.M. or his field engineering office. When replacing the regulator IC I always carefully unsolder the package using a desoldering tool (vacuum type) then *install an IC socket*. This allows a new IC to be tried without further weakening the circuit-board traces and pads.

heat sinks

One last point on power supplies is the subject of heat sinks. Very often commercial designs at the lowprice end have inadequate heat sinks for power semiconductors. Occasionally you'll even find power semiconductors "heat sink" mounted to a steel chassis or bracket. This, of course, saves the O.E.M. money but provides poor heat conductivity. A simple retrofit of an aluminum or copper plate can often prevent persistent semiconductor failures due to overheating. Another pitfall is the application of modular power supplies, especially the molded-in-epoxy block types. These modules are frequently designed to be operated with good thermal contact to a large aluminum chassis or other good heat dissipator. Floating them on a fiberglass circuit board in a stagnant air location is a sure way for them to fail.

conclusion

We have touched on a number of types of power supplies and the ways in which they can be separated into sections, the section at fault isolated, and finally that section repaired. There are many other regulator forms: shunt regulators, switching regulators, and even regulators that rely on ferro-resonance in transformers and other clever magnetic tricks. These other regulators are not so common that space can be devoted to them here; but they, too, can be fixed using the same general principles: separate, isolate, repair.

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Back in the thirties, before the explosion of electroniccomponent availability and refinements, amateur radio was more relaxed. You could tune across the phone bands and hear anything from a rock-crusher with broadcast-band quality eating up 20 "kilocycles" of bandwidth to a self-excited oscillator modulated by a loop-coupled telephone mike. CW was more often effected by a straight key than a bug. And since voltage regulators were not yet generally available, many CW signals chirped, thumped, clicked or yooped — some were pure raspberry (filter capacitors were expensive). Added to this charm was brass-pounder rhythms such as the "Banana Boat Roll" and "Lake Erie" swing and many, many more – most with generous amounts of syncopation thrown in. Individuality there was.

Today the phone bands are sideband-tight and log compressed. Almost all CW signals are chirpless dc, with or without crystal control. And, with a few exceptions,¹ electronic keyers coldly subtract character from keying. Clearly the effect of signal quality in days gone by was not all bad by any means. You could often copy a DX station precisely because he had the sound of a buzz saw



fig. 1. Block diagram of the basic Tone-Tag modulation system for enhancing reception of CW signals.

or maybe a peanut-whistle chirp. He was different, and it helped. Although some purists frowned on those raunchy sounds, they were less piercing to the ear (probably less damaging physiologically) and much more pleasant to copy.

system description

Because of technological progress much of the old

By Don E. Hildreth, W6NRW, Post Office Box 3, Sunnyvale, California 94088 character of CW signals is gone forever; but perhaps today's technology can restore some of it. Of course you could make all signals sound like a buzz saw simply by cutting some of the power supply filter out of your receiver. You'd lose the piercing CW notes, but all signals would still sound alike. Tone-TagTM is my answer to resistors R1 and R2 (fig. 2) between ground and open at a selected rate not only creates amplitude modulation, but it does so at the binaural crossover frequency. Every effort was made to obtain a modulated tone without superimposing startup delays or transients on the basic desired signal.



part of the problem. I use it to accomplish two major objectives:

1. Tone modulate a selected signal without changing adjacent signals.

2. Provide a tuning aid to determine quickly and precisely the location of the 750-Hz crossover point in my binaural synthesizer for CW.²

You'll note that the first objective can be accomplished whether or not you use a binaural synthesizer. You can apply the Tone-Tag principle to any system. The general idea is shown in **fig. 1. Fig. 2** shows circuit details. Although there are many ways to effect modulation, this method takes advantage of a basic characteristic of the VCVS active filter class. In this case, reducing resistance from a minus op-amp port to ground not only increases gain, but the gain is increased most around the filter cutoff frequency. Therefore, switching

circuit

A tone-modulating oscillator, U1, runs at approximately 170 Hz (this frequency is between the 4th and 5th subharmonics of the 750-Hz listening frequency to avoid harmonic beat notes). Under no-signal conditions, the modulating oscillator's assymetrical square wave is inhibited by clamp CR3. The clamp is held in conduction by a quiescent -0.7 volt output from op amp U3. Divider R3, R4 inhibits modulator diodes CR1, CR2 when strong signals pass through the system above and below 750 Hz. When a nominal 750-Hz signal appears, it is amplified and filtered by U2, a narrow-band filter, then fed to amplifier U3. Positive half cycles appearing at U3 output periodically open the clamp CR3, which allows samples of the 170-Hz oscillator to do its work on the modulation diodes. In this way, only those signals in the filter passband near crossover are modulated - a method that is as effective as it is simple. Fig. 3 shows a complete system including a 300-Hz input filter with adjustable skirts.

The 741 IC op amp or its equivalent will work in all circuits shown, but a 308 or 301A with a 3-pF frequency-compensation capacitor between pins 1 and 8 will provide more margin for the U2 circuit in fig. 2. Carbon-film resistors are rated better than carbon composition for the active filters, but 5%, %-watt carbon resistors are usually sufficient. It's better to use capacitors with a tolerance of 10% or better, unless you wish to spend some time with a bridge. I've had good results with 50- or 100-volt 10% mylar film capacitors (James Electronics and others).

function on input audio signals as low as 10 mV rms; therefore, considerable dynamic-range flexibility is provided. Hopefully your receiver, in addition to its other good features, has a well-designed i-f amplifier and detector (mixer for CW); for although an audio processor can help a marginal i-f system, it will do much better with one that provides a good single-signal response and one that does not generate copious quantities of spurs. An excellent bandwidth to work with this system is around 1 kHz with a 6-60 dB shape factor of 2.

operating procedures

With your receiver bfo set around 750 Hz above or



fig. 3. Complete Model 1100 system including Tone-Tag, binaural synthesizer, and 4-pole, 300-Hz input filter.

input requirements

Since distortion in the driving receiver and early stages of this system can reduce effective binaural action, very linear operation is desirable. This can be assured by keeping signals out of the final low- and high-pass active filter stages to a level of *not more* than 5 or 6 volts p-p. This level will also avoid interaction between signal levels and the modulation function.

As a distortion-effect example, if a receiver produces a condition where the second or third harmonics of a hypothetical 500-Hz signal are down only 10 or 20 dB, then the effect of the excellent binaural separation built into the system is largely compromised. A similar case is true for intermodulation distortion, and we have enough of these problems with our nonlinear ears. When you consider that the maximum physiological binaural potential tends to be only about 7 dB,³ it's best to stay very linear (operate well below saturation) and don't listen with more than comfortable volume.

Available gain in the Tone-Tag system will allow it to

below its i-f passband center and with binaural skirts *up*, simply tune a desired CW station to binaural center. At this point, coincident with equal energy in your right and left speakers or phones, the received signal will pick up a gentle tone modulation. At the same time, signals to the right and left (higher or lower beat note) will remain pure dc. Under heavy interference you may turn the skirt-control to drop the wideband skirts, leaving the tone-modulated signal unchanged. Usually, however, it seems better to leave the skirts – or floor – reasonably well up and enjoy three modes of selectivity: binaural, Tone-Tag, and the "ear-brain" filter.⁴ Frequency response with typical skirt control positions is shown in **fig. 4**.

What about using this system for receiving phone signals? To me they sound better than with a monaural audio system. The stations you hear seem to occupy a wide band of space in front of you; but of course, Tone-Tag just doesn't come into the picture. Under interference or high noise, you can drop the flat skirts 10 dB or so to improve copy. With music, leave the skirts up and enjoy simulated stereo.

conclusions

With Tone-Tag, one of the desirable factors of old, lost through technological improvement, has been returned - at your choice of application. Now you can apply tone modulation and binaural action to any CW signal you select. This provides a much wider field than before. And while it is true you won't have much luck binaurally separating or modulating just one of several signals within a few Hz of each other, these cases are not too frequent. On balance, we are ahead.



fig. 4. Frequency response of the binaural bandpass filter and Tone-Tag modulation system. The 75-Hz Tone-Tag filter is cascaded with the 300-Hz input filter, which provides skirts equivalent to those from a 6-pole filter in addition to enhancement from the binaural filters.

A narrowband filter is used as a part of this system; but in this case it's not in the direct signal path so it doesn't ring and ping with noise and signal alike. This system helps the selective process without interfering with our fantastic ear-brain filter.

Considerable experimentation was applied in choosing a tone-modulated frequency. Brainwave rates were even tried. "Alpha" sounds fine as long as keying rates are slow; but for all-around use, the frequency shown seemed best to me.

acknowledgement

I wish to thank Dick Turrin, W2IMU, for providing a copy of reference 4 and for some very interesting references indicating potential s/n improvements when comparing monaural with binaural listening.

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calculating line-of-sight distance

o

to the horizon

Users of the vhf/uhf spectrum often want to know the line-of-sight distance from the top of some particular object to the horizon. The distance is given by the following formula:

$$D = \sqrt{2Rh + h^2} \tag{1}$$

where

- D = line-of-sight distance from the observing point to the horizon
- R = radius of the earth to the average terrain surrounding the observing point
- h = height of the observing point above the average terrain

You may use any units of measure you like as long as you are consistent throughout the equation.

Eq. 1 does not take into consideration variations in terrain between the observer and the horizon, which of course can alter the actual distance that he will see, nor does it consider the characteristics of propagation (refraction, multipath), which often affect transmission range.

The value of R is not critical, however, regardless of latitude or altitude above sea level. The following approximations, though based on mid latitudes, will give excellent results regardless of where you live.

$$R \approx 20,890,400$$
 feet

or

$R \approx 6,367,400$ meters

The really important factor is the height of the observing point above the average terrain, and this figure should be as accurate as possible.*

While the distance formula is quite simple, it is not always easy to remember the radius of the earth. For those who use the English system of measurements, the following is an excellent approximation:

$$D(miles) = \sqrt{1.5h} (feet)$$
(2)

*Excellent topographical charts are avilable that show contour lines depicting elevation in feet above mean sea level for just about any community in the country. These charts are avilable at nominal cost from the U.S. Geological Survey, Denver, Colorado 80225, or Washington, D.C. 20242. A folder describing topographical maps and symbols is available on request from the USGS. Editor

By William D. Johnston, WB5CBC, 1808 Pomona Drive, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001 Note that the height is in *feet* and the answer is in *miles*. This approximation is so close that the distance error does not exceed a tenth of a mile until you rise to well over 60,000 feet in altitude. (This also makes it useful in finding the distance to the horizon from an airplane). You may find it interesting to prove to yourself just why this approximation is valid.

Conversely, if you want to know how high you must be to see a certain distance, **Eq. 2** is rewritten as:

$$h = \frac{2D^2}{3} \tag{3}$$

Once again, remember that distance is in miles and height is in feet.

If you use the metric system of measurements, the following is an excellent approximation for line-of-sight distance to the horizon in *kilometers* when the height is in *meters*:

$$D$$
 (kilometers) = $\sqrt{12.7h}$ (meters) (4)

To see how high you must be to see a certain distance, this may be rewritten as

$$h (meters) = \frac{D^2}{12.7}$$
 (kilometers) (5)

Table 1 will give you an idea of what the formulas reveal for both metric and English measurements. You

table	1.	Distance	to	the	horizon	as	а	function	of	observing
height	, E	nglish and	me	tric	measuren	nen	t s	ystems.		

bserving height, h (ft)	distance, D (mi)	observing height, h (m)	distance D (km)
1000	39	300	62
2000	55	600	87
3000	67	900	107
4000	77	1200	124
5000	87	1500	138
6000	95	1800	151
7000	102	2100	164
8000	110	2400	175
9000	116	2700	185
10000	122	3000	195
11000	128	3300	205
12000	134	3600	214
13000	140	3900	223
14000	145	4200	231
15000	150	4500	239

may be surprised that, even at fairly high altitudes, the horizon really is not very far away. As a friend of mine said recently, "Not only is the earth round but it is very, very round."

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microcomputer interfacing: a software UART

This month we return to the subject of the substitution of software for hardware, i.e., the substitution of machine-level routines and subroutines for specific digital hardware devices that store, manipulate, transmit, or receive digital information. The hardware device we'll discuss is the universal asynchronous receiver/ transmitter, or UART - a 40-pin integrated-circuit chip that contains an independent 8-bit asynchronous receiver and an independent 8-bit asynchronous transmitter. Data rates range from dc to 60,000 bits per second. The receiver and transmitter sections of the chip can be programmed for 5, 6, 7, or 8 data bits; 1 or 2 stop bits; even or odd parity; and parity or no parity. The chip also contains a variety of flags. For further details, we refer you to manufacturer's literature or to references 1 through 3.

UART interface

An interface circuit for a simplified software UART is shown in fig. 1. Because of the nature of the specific application, which we'll discuss at the end of this column, there was no need for special flag bits or error checking. As a consequence, the interface circuit consists of a single three-state input buffer gate (SN74126), a single output-data latch (SN7474), two input deviceselect pulses, and one output device-select pulse. With appropriate modifications of the device-select pulses, this circuit can be used with almost any microprocessor chip. In our case, a 8080A-based microcomputer operating at 750 kHz was used. This system generates and detects, in combination with operating software, asynchronous serial ASCII-coded, 5-volt, TTL data. For teleprinter operation, additional hardware is required to convert the 5-volt logic levels to 20 mA current loop operation.4

By Paul E. Field, David G. Larsen, WB4HYJ, Peter R. Rony, and Jonathan A. Titus

Dr. Field is guest author of this month's column. Dr. Field and Mr. Larsen, Department of Chemistry, and Dr. Rony, Department of Chemical Engineering, are with the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia. Mr. Titus is President of Tychon, Inc., Blacksburg, Virginia. The transmit subroutine, shown in **table 1**, for the software UART occupies 20-25 successive program steps in memory once the appropriate PUSH, POP, and RET instructions have been included. Also required is a 9.09 millisecond time-delay subroutine, which corresponds to an asynchronous serial ASCII data transmission rate of 110 Baud, i.e., teleprinter speed. The program in **table 1** is described as follows:

Register L is used as the bit counter for the 11-bit ASCII word, and is set initially to octal 013. The seven data bits plus the parity bit, which is bit 8, are assumed to be present in the accumulator. At LO = 146, the accumulator is ORed to itself to clear the carry bit, which is shown on the far left in fig. 2. In fig. 2 the least-significant data bit is bit 1. At address LO = 147, a RAL instruction is performed to rotate the start bit to bit position DO in the accumulator. Fig. 3 should pro-



fig. 1. Interface circuit between an 8080A-based microcomputer and a TTL asynchronous serial ASCII input-output device.

Reprinted with permission from American Laboratory, June, 1976, copyright © International Scientific Communications, Inc., Fairfield, Connecticut 1976. vide assistance in understanding the four different rotate instructions in the 8080A microprocessor instruction set. $^{\rm 5}$

At LO = 150, the start bit is output to the SN7474 data latch, which is shown in fig. 1. The program then goes into a 9.09 ms time delay subroutine, after which bit 1 is rotated into the DO accumulator position and the carry bit is set to logic 1. Bit 1 is output to the

The time-delay subroutine can be modified so that you can transmit at data rates from 60 to 9600 Baud for a 750-kHz clock rate and higher for 2-MHz and 4-MHz 8080A clock rates.

The conversion from one data transmission rate to another is easily accomplished with the aid of appropriate software time delay subroutines, which replace RC time-constant circuits. An additional advantage that

table 1. Microcomputer subroutine that demonstrates the asynchronous serial transmission of an eleven-bit ASCII word at a teletype speed of 110 Baud.

LO memory	instruction		
address	byte	mnemonic	description
•	٠	•	
•	•	•	
•	Accumula	tor contains 8-bit	ASCII word. Bit 8 is the parity bit,
	which can	be set for even o	r odd parity, or no parity.
144	056	MVIL	Set ASCII word bit counter to 013
145	013	013	
146	267	ORA A	Set carry bit to logic 0
147	027	RAL	Rotate carry bit to D0 in accumulator
150	323	OUT	Output carry bit to SN7474 latch
151	004	004	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •
152	315	CALL	Call 9.09 ms time delay subroutine
153	<b2></b2>	 B2>	L0 address byte of time delay subroutine
154	<вз>	<вз>	HI address byte of time delay subroutine
155	037	RAR	Rotate bit in ASCII word to DO in accumulator
156	067	STC	Set carry bit to logic 1
157	323	OUT	Output bit to SN7474 latch
160	004	004	
161	055	DCR L	Decrement bit counter by 1
162	302	JNZ	If bit counter has value of zero, ignore this
			instruction. If all of the bits in the 11-bit
			ASCII word have not yet been transmitted,
			jump to address LO = 152 above.
163	152	152	LO address byte
164	<вз>	<вз>	HI address byte
•			
•			
•	At this po	int, the 8-bit ASCII	word contained in the accumulator has been transmitted.
•	Two stop	bits have been adde	d at the end of the eight bits and a single start bit, at logic
	0, has beer	n added at the begin	nning of the eight bits.

SN7474 latch, the ASCII word bit counter in register L is decremented, and program control is returned to the time delay subroutine, which is called at LO = 152. The loop from LO =152 to LO = 164 is executed a total of eleven times, after which register L becomes zero and the JNZ instruction at LO = 162 is ignored. A software UART transmit subroutine possesses a flexibility equivalent to the original 40-pin UART chip. With appropriate modifications to the program or the original accumulator data, you can transmit 5, 6, 7, or 8 data bits; 1 or 2 stop bits; even or odd parity; and parity or no parity.

Ac	сu	mu	۱a	t	0	I
----	----	----	----	---	---	---



fig. 2. Schematic of the accumulator contents after the ORA A instruction in the software UART transmit subroutine in table 1. The carry bit is the start bit, which is at logic 0. accrues from the use of software is the potential to perform code conversions. For example, 5-level Baudot KSR machines are in widespread use and can still be obtained for under \$50. It is not too difficult to develop software that converts ASCII to Baudot and thus produce an inexpensive hard-copy terminal for the laboratory scientist or engineer, amateur, or computer buff.

The software UART receive subroutine requires 50 instructions and will not be repeated here.^{*} The basic programming concepts associated with the receive subroutine are illustrated in fig. 4, which represents an eleven-bit asynchronous series ASCII word that is being detected by the 8080A-based microcomputer with the aid of the SN74126 three-state buffer gate shown in fig. 1. The program repeatedly tests the "serial ASCII in" line in fig. 1 for a logic 0 state. Once a logic 0 state, which corresponds to a start bit, is detected, the program goes into a 4.54-ms wait loop. Upon leaving the wait loop, the program again inputs the logic 0 into bit

*Copies of the transmit and receive subroutines and a description of a "smart" remote-data entry station are available from Prof. Paul Field, Department of Chemistry, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia 20461. position DO in the accumulator, thus testing the validity of the start bit. The start bit is rotated to the carry bit, and the program then enters a 9.09-ms wait loop, after which it inputs bit 1 into position DO in the accumulator. Register H is used as the SAVE register, which stores can also be generated from software with the aid of a second SN7474 latch.

The software UART routines described above by Dr. Paul Field of VPI & SU were in a "smart" remote data entry station that was tied through a 20-mA current



fig. 4. Schematic of an eleven-bit asynchronous serial ASCII word being received by the 8080A-based microcomputer. Each bit has a time duration of 9.09 ms. The logic state of each bit is detected at the middle of the bit.

the growing ASCII data word. The SAVE register is rotated one position, and the 9.09-ms wait loop is again entered, after which bit 2, which is a logic 0 in fig. 4, is input into bit position DO in the accumulator. The input of successive data and parity bits continues until the entire 8-bit data word is entered into the SAVE register. The two stop bits are also detected. With appropriate modifications, the program can detect parity or framing errors or an overrun condition. A data ready flag signal



fig. 3. The four rotate instructions in the 8080A microprocessor instruction set.

loop to a PDP 8/L minicomputer in a physical chemistry laboratory. The data entry station intercepted the 20-mA teletype current loop tied to the minicomputer. The remote data entry station permitted students to load data into memory and then transmit it as a block to the minicomputer, which analyzed the data and provided a printout. With the aid of the 20-mA current loop operated in the full duplex mode, ten or more remote data entry stations could be tied to the minicomputer.

This column provides a good demonstration of the software-hardware tradeoffs that can be accomplished using microcomputers. Similar, and perhaps more comprehensive, routines have already been written for all the popular microprocessor chips, such as the 16-bit PACE or the 8-bit 6800. The faster and less expensive microcomputers become, the more likely that all moderate-speed digital functions will be executed through software. The theme of software replacing hardware is an important one, and we'll return to it many times in the future.

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This is our new "turnkey" board. Turn on your Altair or Imsai and go (No Bootstrapping). Controls one terminal (CRT or TTY) and one or two cassettes with all programs in ROM. Enables you to turn on and just type in what you want done. Loads, Dumps, Examines, Modifies from the keyboard in Hex. Loads Octal. For the cassettes, it is a fully software controlled Load and Dump at the touch of a key. Even loads MITS Basic. Ends "Bootstrap Chafe" forever. Uses 512 bytes of ROM, one UART for the terminal and one USART for the Cassettes. Our orders are backing up on this one. #2SIO (R)

Kit form \$140.00 Fully assembled and tested \$170.00

Fill out form and send check or money

91 — PRINT	NATIONAL MULTIPLEX CO 3474 Rand Avenue, Box 288 South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080 SHIP TO:	201-561-3600	Data Recorder CC-7 @ \$149.95 Data Recorder CC-7A @ \$169.95 Please enclose \$2.00 Shipping & Handling on each Recorder or I/O Board.
Mailing Labe	CARD NO. ZIP EXPIRATION DATE		Operating & Technical Manual (Schematics) Includes Software & Hookups for 8080, 6800, and I/O. \$2.00 N. J. Residents add



Just look at these photos and specifications. The HW-2036 gives you the kind of 2-meter performance you WANT!

HW-2036 SPECIFICATIONS

Receiver: Sensitivity: 0.5 #V for 12 dB SINAD (or 15 dB of Quieting). Squeich Threshold: 0.3 #V or less. Audio Output: 1.5 watts at 10% T.H.D. typically 2 watts. (5 kHz deviation). Image Rejection: -45 dB or greater. Spurious Rejection: -50 dB or greater. IF Rejection: -80 dB or greater. Internally Generated Spurious: Below 1 #V equivalent. Bandwidth: 6 dB at 15 kHz min. and 60 dB at 30 kHz max. Modulation Acceptance: 7.5 kHz, min. Transmitter: Power Output: 10 watts min. at 25°C and 13.8 VDC, into a 50 P load. Harmonic & Spurious Output: -70 dB within 20 MHz of carrier; -50 dB elsewhere, -40 dB harmonics. Modulation: FM, 0 to 7.5 kHz, adjustable. Duty Cycle: 100% with infinite VSWR. Tone Encoder: 3 tones, 70 to 200 Hz, approx. ±700 kHz deviation. Transmitter Offset: 0 (simplex), -600 kHz, +600 kHz with crystals supplied. Provision for one additional offset crystal. General: Frequency Coverage: Any 2 MHz segment from 143.5 to 148.5 MHz. Both receiver and transmitter must be aligned for the same 2 MHz segment. Frequency Increments: 5 kHz. Frequency Stability: ±.0015%. Operating Temperature Range: 15° to 125° F. (-10° to 50° C). Operat-ing Voltage Range: 12.6 to 16 VDC (13.8 VDC nominal). Current Consumption: RX: 700 mA max. squelched. TX: 2.6 A max. at 13.8 volts. Dimensions: 234" high x 814" wide x 976" deep. Weight: 6.25 lbs.

Actual spectrum analyzer photos of HW-2036 operating at 147 MHz. Spurs within 20 MHz of carrier are down a full 70 dB.



Heathkit Synthesized 2-meter Transceiver!

The new Heathkit 2-meter frequency-synthesized transceiver combines state-of-the-art technology with operating ease, convenience and versatility in an easy-to-build kit that's about HALF THE COST of comparable synthesized transceivers. It's the one to buy and build for real 2-meter PERFORMANCE!

Operation is easier than ever! The front panel lever switches select any frequency in any 2 MHz segment of the 143.5 to 148.5 operating frequency range. You select the last four digits, three with lever switches which display the frequency directly and the last with a 0/5 kHz toggle switch which makes ALL 2-meter frequencies in the band available. If you inadvertently dial up an out-of-band frequency, the transmitter simply will not key.

And the signal is solid! The HW-2036 puts out a minimum 10 watts at 25° C and 13.8 VDC. And it operates into an infinite VSWR without failure. The transmitter output is extremely clean, with spurious output greater than 70 dB below carrier. True FM circuitry means you transmit and receive with excellent audio quality too.

The receiver is hot! Sensitivity is an outstanding 0.5 µV for 12 dB SINAD. An 8-pole IF crystal filter provides an ideally shaped bandpass for excellent adjacent channel rejection and its superb selectivity makes it the one to have for crowded signal areas.

Complete operating versatility! A built-in continuous tone encoder with three customer-adjusted tones selectable on the front panel accesses most repeaters. The HW-2036 provides all the offset capability you'll ever need built-in simplex, plus and minus 600 kHz offsets, and an Aux. position that lets you add a crystal for any other frequency. And, if you order the HW-2036 with the Heathkit



The HW-2036 is our best 2-meter transceiver! Check it out for yourself and you'll see it's the one to have for years of reliable 2-meter communications!

Our HW-2021 hand-held 2-meter transceiver is the one to have if you're working portable. It gives you a full 1-watt output plus 5 receive and 5 transmit channels and flexible simplex/offset. It's hand-held, battery-operated, and there's an optional

auto patch encoder to add telephone versatility at low cost. Crystal-controlled, with better than 0.05% frequency stability. Sensitivity is 0.5 µV for 12 dB SINAD.

The HW-2036 and HW-2021 are two of the finest 2-meter transceivers around. Use 'em both for complete 2-meter versatility! Read more about them, and all the other superb Heathkit Amateur Radio products in the new Heathkit Catalog. Send coupon below!



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Nearly 400 fun-to-build, practical and money-saving electronic kits! Send coupon today!

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ten-minute timer

The SN74121 works well as an astable multivibrator although it was designed for monostable operation. In the circuit of fig. 1, U1 generates pulses at 4-second intervals. U2 and U3 divide the pulse train by 144 which results in a period of 576 seconds (9 minutes, 36 seconds). U4 is then turned on and produces a positive output pulse of 20 seconds duration. Transistor Q1 actuates a keyer or other signalling device such as a sidetone oscillator, lamp or LED.

The LED connected to pin 1 of U1 flashes a few milliseconds at the beginning of each 4-second period and makes it easy to adjust the time interval in comparison with WWV. The timing adjustment is made with trimpot R1. The timing range may be extended by changing R1 to 5 kilohms and R2 to 45k.

It is possible to reset the counter (see dashed circuitry), but this requires an additional switch. At my station, I identify at the beginning of a QSO, and again when the ten-minute alarm flashes — then I am in synchronization with the timer.

The timing tolerance over the full period is within about ± 5 seconds. However, this requires good quality capacitors at C4 and C5 and a stable power supply.

Herbert Seeger, DJ9RP

audio mixer

I recently came up with a system which materially improved my ssb "talk power" and am offering it here to the amateur fraternity. I had been using an Astatic D-104 microphone with relatively little success in the DX pileups. Friends told me the audio sounded "thin" so I bought an Electrovoice EV-674 dynamic. Reports with the EV-674 indicated I sounded smooth but muffled, as if talking into a barrel. It occurred to me that the best features of each microphone could be combined with an audio mixer. Radio Shack sells a well-made, four channel transistorized mixer for \$13.95.

I use two of the channels and mix the D104 with the EV-674 in the proper ratio. My ssb signal now has audio punch and quality. I also get through the pileups sooner. The "W6KNE Equalizer" should help provide good audio for everyone, particularly those operators whose natural voice does not come across strong and with "punch."

Gary Legel, W6KNE



fig. 1. Ten-minute timer uses 74121 (U1) as an astable multivibrator, generating pulses a 4-second intervals. U2 and U3 divide the pulse train by 144 which results in a period of 576 seconds (9 minutes, 36 seconds).



SSB NSCEIV MOBILE MONOBANDERS

LSB

LSB

LSB

USB

1.8 - 2.0 MHz.

3.5 - 4.0 MHz.

7.0 - 7.3 MHz.

14.0 - 14.35 MHz.

COMPLETELY SOLID STATE . Mosfet mixers for

excellent I.M. and cross modulation performance. J-Fet

oscillators for stability. I.C.'s used in digital frequency

counter, balanced modulator, receiver I.F. amplifier, and

DIGITAL DIAL • Frequency can be read at a glance. 0.3 inch L.E.D. displays are easily visible. Frequency

SPEECH COMPRESSOR • Increases average output power

\$**395**°° MADE IN U.S.A. SIZE: 31/2 x 7 x 81/2

SPECIFICATIONS

GENERAL MODES: S.S.B. and C.W. with Sidetone POWER REQUIREMENTS: 12-14 volts D.C. negative ground only. 12 amps maximum. Reverse polarity protection. WEIGHT: 5.4 lbs.

RECEIVER

- SENSITIVITY: Less than 0.5 microvolt for 15 db. signal plus noise/noise ratio.
- SELECTIVITY: 2.1 KHz @ 6 db., 3.8 KHz @ 60 db
- IMAGE REJECTION: Better than 60 db.

AUDIO OUTPUT: 2 Watts at less than 5% distortion into 4 ohm load

TRANSMITTER

POWER INPUT: 100 watts P.E.P. or C.W., nominal. POWER OUTPUT: 50 Watts P.E.P. or C.W., minimum

OUTPUT IMPEDANCE: 52 ohms, nominal.

UNWANTED SIDEBAND: -40 db or better. CARRIER SUPPRESSION: -60 db or better.

THIRD ORDER DISTORTION: -30 db or better. SPURIOUS OUTPUTS: -30 db or better. AUDIO RESPONSE: 400 to 2,500 Hz., ± 2 db.

MIC INPUT: High impedance dynamic or crystal microphone.

EXTERNAL AMPLIFIER CONTROL: Open col-lector to 100 volts @ 1 amp., maximum.

OPTIONAL ACCESSORIES:

MODEL MMB-1

Plug-in mobile mounting bracket making all connections to the transceiver at once, providing quick and easy installation or removal from the car. Price \$45.00

MODEL PS-1

Matching A.C. power supply with built-in speaker. Supplies 13.8 VDC regulated at 12 amps. maximum. 110/220 VAC, 50-60 Hz. Price \$125.00 **ORDERING INFORMATION:**

All Prices F.O.B factory plus shipping. California residents add 6% sales tax. To order now, send a deposit (\$25.00 minimum) to secure a delivery posi-Fully refundable at any time. Payment in full required prior to shipment.



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master charg

approximately 6 db. Level set by mic control. NOISE BLANKER

 Noise pulses are blanked ahead of the crystal filter for optimum reduction of interference. 100 WATTS INPUT • P.E.P. or C.W. 50 watts output

counter offers 100 Hz. accuracy.

audio output for functional simplicity. No relays.

New!

MODEL 160

MODEL 80

MODEL 40

MODEL 20

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(minimum). BROADBAND OUTPUT . Infinite VSWR protection.

Multiple pi-section low-pass filter for minimum spurious output.

RECEIVER FRONT END DESIGN • AGC controlled pin diode R.F. attenuator for low distortion large signal handling capabilities. Triple tuned preselector offers superior R.F. selectivity.

QUALITY CONSTRUCTION • Utilizing glass epoxy P.C. boards and commercial grade components. All electrical connections soldered for reliability. P.C. boards accessible for easy servicing.

STANDARD ACCESSORIES

Mobile mounting bracket and power connector with 8 foot battery cable are supplied with unit.

WARRANTY • Full one year warranty on all parts and workmanship with exception to damage incurred by abuse. Our customer service offers one week turnaround time on repairs.

Whether you go for fat coils, skinny coils, switch flickers or automatics, Swan has the mobile antenna that's exactly right for your needs. So top off your mobile rig with a Swan antenna. Every time you press the mike button you'll know you're delivering the biggest signal your rig is capable of. Without compromise.

Mobile 45. This switch-adjustable 5-band antenna features a Swan Hi-Q coil and positive-stop, 8-position switch with gold-plated contacts. Select 10, 15, 20, 40 or 75 meters and go to work knowing this rugged antenna won't let you down..... \$114.95

> 742 Automatic. Just resonate this triband on 20, 40 and 75 meters. Bandwidth approximately 100 KC on each band. Now you can work any frequency in those bandwidths on all three bands and never touch the antenna. Handles 500 watts P.E.P..... \$79.95

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Series 36 Hi-O. The most efficient single-band antennas you can buy. Rated at 1000 watts P.E.P. Interchangeable coils for 15, 20, 40 and

75 meters. These rugged, durable antennas include base, coil and whip. \$39.50 to \$47.95

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SWAN ANTENNAS **GIVE YOU FOUR** WAYS TO GO WHEN YOU **GO MOBILE**.

2 0

20

There's only one power reading in single sideband operation that means anything: true peak envelope power of your voice modulated signal.

And that's exactly what our precision WM-3000 peak/RMS wattmeter gives you.

You get flat frequency response from our new directional coupler that lets you read forward or reflected power from 3.5 to 30 MHz with more accuracy than you'll ever need. And you can read it on 200, 500, 1000 and 2000-watt scales in RMS as well as peak at the flip of a switch.

Get a Swan WM-3000 meter today and find out what's happening with your single sideband rig. Only \$66.95. Use your Swan credit card. Applications at your dealer or write to us.



(Price FOB Oceanside, CA)

SWAN PEAK READING WATTMETER tells it like it is on SSB.





new touch-tone encoders for variety of applications



Looking for a *Touch-Tone* encoder? Need 12 or 16 buttons for mobile, hand-held or desk-mounting applications? If so, Pipo Communications may have exactly what you've been looking for in their recently announced PP-1 (12-button) and PP-2 (16-button) *Touch-Tone* encoders.

The PP-1 measures just $3/8 \times 2 \times 2 - 11/16$ in ches $(9.5 \times 50.8 \times 68 \text{ mm})$ and the PP-2 measures $3/8 \times 2 \cdot 3/8 \times 2 \cdot 11/16$ inches $(9.5 \times 60.3 \times 68 \text{ mm})$. Both pads are self-contained and feature positive touch control; that is, the keys depress. There are no "potted" parts, so servicing is easy, and the units are immune to rf interference. They possess low distortion at high output levels while drawing current only when the buttons are depressed. The output level is easily adjustable from the front of either pad.

Each unit is supplied with instructions for hook-up and use, schematic diagram, drilling template and all necessary mounting hardware. These *Touch-Tone* encoders are capable of operating at any temperature between zero and 140 degrees F., at any voltage between 4.5 and 16 volts dc, and draw between 7.5 and 20 mA in use.

The PP-1 is priced at \$55.00, and the PP-2 at \$58.00. (California residents please add 6% sales tax.)

For additional information, write Pipo Communications, Box 3435, Hollywood, California 90028; telephone (213) 852-1515, or use *check-off* on page 126.

new catalog from Heathkit

Heathkit has just announced its colorful new fall 1976 catalog, a free 96-page release describing nearly 400 electronic kits for virtually every do-ityourself interest. Heathkit product categories include amateur radio, hi-fi components, color TV, test instruments, digital clocks and weather instruments, radio control equipment, marine, aircraft and auto accessories, and many more.

Some of the interesting new products described in the fall catalog are: a new electronic TV game for Heath solid-state TV owners, a combination digital clock/indoor-outdoor thermometer, a portable power megaphone/yelp alert, professional-quality harmonic and IM distortion analyzers, a shirt-pocket-size color alignment generator, and a touchcontrol light switch.

Heath Company is the world's largest manufacturer of electronic products in kit form. Their step-by-step instruction manuals can be followed easily by anyone, and are world-famous for clarity, precision and accuracy.

For your new, free, catalog write Heath Company, Department 350-04, Benton Harbor, Michigan 49022; telephone (616) 982-3417, or use *check-off* on page 126.

alphanumeric printer kit

Southwest Technical Products Corporation recently announced its new low-cost alpha-numeric printer kit. The PR-40 is a 5x7 dot matrix impact printer capable of printing the 64-character upper case ASCII set with 40 characters/line at a print rate of 75 lines/minute on standard 3-7/8 inches (9.84cm) wide rolls of adding machine paper. One complete line is printed at a time from an internal 40-character line buffer memory. Printing takes place either upon the receipt of a carriage return, or automatically, whenever the line buffer memory is filled.

The PR-40 printer is available in kit form only and includes the assembled print mechanism, chassis, circuit boards, components, 120/240-volt ac, 50/60 Hz power supply, assembly instructions, one ribbon and one roll of paper. The price is \$250, postpaid, in the United States. Delivery is approximately 30 days. For more information write Southwest Technical Products Corporation, 219 West Rhapsody, San Antonio, Texas 78216; telephone (512) 344-0241, or use *check-off* on page 126.

rechargable cordless soldering iron



Wahl Clipper Corporation recently introduced its new *Iso-Tip 60* Cordless Soldering Iron. The low voltage, battery-operated, ground-free unit is the first that can be recharged from "dead" to "full" in one hour. With the *Iso-Tip* 60, the user can enjoy virtually uninterrupted service from a single unit, making cordless soldering practical for heavy-use applications.

The *Iso-Tip 60* Cordless Soldering Iron has the capacity for up to 125 or more electronic joints on a single
charge. It can, however, be kept at a constant "full" charge simply by resting it in the recharge stand when not in use. The iron is equipped to accept a very fast charge when its battery is down and then switch to a trickle rate for maintenance purpose. An LED indicator shows when the unit is fully charged.

Standard kit no. 7800 from Wahl includes an *Iso-Tip 60* Cordless Soldering Iron, a recharging stand, a fine tip, a chisel tip and an instruction booklet. Any of the 16 Wahl snap-in soldering tips are usable with the new iron.

For further information contact Ross Advertising, Inc., 5901 N. Prospect Road, Peoria, Illinois 61614, or use check-off on page 126.

KSR-type terminals from Info-Tech



Info-Tech, Incorporated, a manufacturer of digital electronic systems for the amateur radio market and for light computer use, recently announced two new KSR-type terminals featuring low price and versatility. One terminal features 16 lines of 32 characters and the other, 16 lines of 64 characters; both with RS-232 compatibility.

The new terminals interface with all popular micro-computer kits and any video monitor.

Detailed technical information and prices may be obtained from Info-Tech, Incorporated, 20 Worthington Drive, St. Louis, Missouri 63043; telephone (314) 576-5489 or use *check-off* on page 126.

ultra low noise jfets

National Semiconductor Corporation announces a new series of ultra low noise junction field-effect transistors. In the past, special selection by the manufacturer was required to provide ultra low noise parts, a factor contributing to their relatively high price and limited availability. The new series of National jfets is specifically produced for ultra low noise audio and video applications, including particle detectors, vidicon and I-R sensor preamplifiers, and audio and video tape amplifiers. The series includes three metal-can devices (NF5101, NF5102 and NF5103) and three TO-92 epoxy devices (PF5101, PF5102 and PF5103).

Key specifications for the new fets include a typical noise figure of 1.5 dB at 10 Hz, and a common-source transconductance of 4000 micromhos minimum with a drain current of 0.5 milliamperes. Another feature of the new



you're carefree

when you know you've got the very best!

Larsen Külrod antennas

Repeater or simplex, home station or mobile, 1 watt or 50 . . . what really counts is the intelligence that gets radiated. Jim Larsen, W7DZL found that out years ago when he was both hamming and running a two-way commercial shop. That's when he started working with mobile antennas . . . gain antennas that didn't waste power in useless heat. Today, thousands and thousands of Larsen Antennas are being used. We call it the Larsen Kulrod® Antenna. Amateurs using them on 2 meters, on 450 and six call them the antenna that lets you hear the difference.

Larsen Külrod Antennas are available for every popular type of mount. For those using a 3/4" hole in their vehicle we suggest the LM mount for fastest, easiest and most efficient attachment.

For the 3/8" hole advocates there's the JM mount... fully patented and the first real improvement in antenna attaching in 25 years.

And for the "no holes" gang there's the unbeatable MM-LM . . . the magnetic mount that defies all road speeds.

Send today for data sheets that give the full story on Larsen Kūlrod Antennas that let you hear the difference and give you carefree communications.

Illustrated . . . Larsen JM-150-K Kūlrod Antenna and mount for 2 meter band. Comes complete with coax, plug and all mounting hardware. Easy to follow instructions. Handles full 200 watts.



11611 N.E. 50th Ave. • P.O. Box 1686 • Vancouver, WA 98663 • Phone: 206/573-2722 In Canada write to: Canadian Larsen Electronics, Ltd. 1340 Clark Drive • Vancouver, B.C. V5L 3K9 • Phone: 604/254-4936 *Külrod ... a registered trademark of Larsen Electronics. series is tight control of the gate-source cutoff voltage. The NF5101 and PF5101 have a gate-source cutoff voltage range of 0.5 to 1.0 volts; the NF5102 and PF5102 have a gate-source cutoff voltage range of 0.8 to 1.4 volt and the NF5103 and PF5103 have a gate-source cutoff voltage range of 1.3 to 2.5 volts.

Unit prices range from about \$1.00 for the plastic version and \$2.50 for the metal package. For further information, including electrical and performance characteristics of these devices, write to National Semiconductor Corporation, 2900 Semiconductor Drive, Santa Clara, California 95051 or use *check-off* on page 126.

Allied Electronics catalog

Off press and ready for mailing is Allied Electronic's 1977 Engineering Manual and Purchasing Guide. The guide is filled with a wide selection of industrial-type electronic parts, components, supplies, and equipment which keep amateurs, engineers, technicians, and hobbyists requesting Allied's guide year after year. And, new in this year's guide is the introduction of metric measurements on many electronic parts and components.

The 1977 edition of the guide is 212 pages full of high-quality electronic parts and equipment from Allied and other leading manufacturers. Choose from a wide variety of new products, in addition to the traditional items which have set the standard for Allied's previous guides. You'll find wire, cable, solid-state devices, test equipment, resistors, trimmers and potentiometers, transformers, switches, timers, connectors, relays, tools, capacitors, new solar energy products, test equipment and even a microcomputer, plus many other electronic parts too numerous to list. Allied offers bulk pricing for quantity buyers, and six nationwide stocking locations assure prompt delivery of ordered merchandise.

There's no need to rely on a friend or business associate for access to Allied's 1977 guide. Write today for your own copy. Send \$1.00, to help cover postage and handling, to Allied Electronics, Dept. 77, 401 East 8th Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76102.



KENWOOD'S

Why wait any longer for a rig that offers top performance, dependability and versatility... the TS-520 has proven itself in the shacks of

thousands of discriminating amateurs, in field day sites, in DX and contest stations, and in countless mobile installations.

Superb craftsmanship is evident throughout ... in its engineering concepts as well as its construction and styling ... craftsmanship that is a Kenwood hallmark.

Maybe the Kenwood TS-520 is the one you have been waiting for.

Kenwood offers accessories guaranteed to add to the pleasure of owning the TS-520. The TV-502 transverter puts you on 2-meters the easy way. (It's completely compatibile with the TS-520.) Simply plug it in and you're on the air. Two more units designed to match the TS-520 are the VFO-520 external VFO and the model SP-520 external speaker. All with Kenwood quality built in.





TS-520 pecifications

MODES USB, LSB, CW POWER: 200 watts PEP input on SSB, 160 watts DC input on CW

ANTENNA IMPEDANCE: 50-75 Ohms unbalanced

CARRIER SUPPRESSION Better than -45 dB UNWANTED SIDEBAND SUPPRESSION: Better than ~40 dB HARMONIC RADIATION Better than ~40 dB

AF RESPONSE 400 to 2600 Hz (-6 dB) AUDIO INPUT SENSITIVITY: 0.25µV for 10 dB (S+N)/N

SELECTIVITY SSB 2.4 kHz (-6 dB) 4.4 kHz (-60 dB) CW 0.5 kHz (-6 dB) 1.5 kHz (-60 dB) (with accessory filter) FREQUENCY STABILITY 100 Hz per 30

minutes after warmup IMAGE RATIO: Better than 50 dB

IF REJECTION. Better than 50 dB TUBE & SEMICONDUCTOR COMPLEMENT

3 tubes (2 x 6146B, 12BY7A), 1 IC, 18 FET, 44 transistors, 84 diodes

DIMENSIONS: 13.1" W x 5.9" H x 13.2" D WEIGHT: 35.2 lbs. SUGGESTED PRICE: \$629.00

VFO-520

Provides high stability with precision gearing. Fronties migh stability with precision gearing. Function switch provides any combination with the TS 520. Both are equipped with VFO indi-cators showing at a glance which VFO is being used. Connects with a single cable and obtains its power from the TS 520. Suggested price: \$115.00.

SP-520

Although the TS-520 has a built in speaker, the addition of the SP-520 provides improved tonal quality. A perfect match in both design and performance. Suggested price: \$22.95.

TV-502

TRANSMITTING/RECEIVING FREQUENCY: 144-145.7 MHz. 145.0-146.0 MHz (option). INPUT/OUTPUT IF FREQUENCY: 28.0-29.7 MHz

TYPE OF EMISSION: SSB (A3J), CW (A1) RATED OUTPUT: 8W (AC operation) ANTENNA INPUT/OUTPUT IMPEDANCE: 50Ω UNWANTED RADIATION: Less than -60 dB RECEIVING SENSITIVITY: More than 1µV at S/N 10 dB

IMAGE RATIO: More than 60 dB IF REJECTION: More than 60 dB FREQUENCY STABILITY Less than ±2.5 kHz during 1-60 min after power switch is ON and within 150 Hz (per 30 min) thereafter.

POWER CONSUMPTION: AC 220/120V. Trans mission 50W max., Reception 12W max. DC 13.8V. Trans

mission 2A max., Reception 0.4A max. POWER REQUIREMENT: AC 220/120V, DC 12-

16V (standard voltage 13.8V) SEMI-CONDUCTOR: FET 5, Transistor 15, Diode 10

DIMENSIONS: 6%" W x 6" H x 131/4" D WEIGHT 11.5 lbs

SUGGESTED PRICE: \$249.00

CW-520 500 Hz CW Crystal Filter: \$45.00.

Prices subject to change without notice

TRIO-KENWOOD COMMUNICATIONS INC. 116 EAST ALONDRA/GARDENA, CA 90248





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FTK0020





CARD FRONT

DIGITS

FTK0001	0.5" High Common Cathode Digit	\$1.00
FTK0002	0.5" High Common Anode Digit	1.00
FTK0003	.357" High Common Cathode Digit	.75
FTK0004	0.8" High Common Cathode Digit	2.00
FTK0005	0.8" High Common Anode Digit	2.00
	0.8" HIGH DISPLAY ARRAYS	
FTK0010	12 Hour, 3½ Digit Clock Display	7.00
FTK0011	24 Hour, 4 Digit Clock Display	8.00
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FTK0020	10 Red LED Lamps	1.00
FTK0021	5 Mixed Colored LED Lamps	1.00
FTK0022	10 LED Mounting Clips	1.00
FTK0023	5 Three Piece LED Mounting Adapters	1.00
	PHOTO TRANSISTORS	
FTK0030	5 Flat Lens Photo Transistors	1.00
FTK0031	5 Round Lens Photo Transistors	1.00
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THESE PRODUCTS ARE PACKAGED FOR OUT-STANDING WALL DISPLAY APPEARANCE

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FTK0400	Digital Clock/Calendar Circuit (FCM7001)	7.00
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FTK0403	Direct Drive Digital Clock Circuit with DC Output (FCM3817D)	5.00
FTK0405	Direct Drive Digital Clock/Calendar Circuit (FCM7015)	6.00
FTK0106	KITS Automobile Clock Kit	40.00

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When calling the repeater on the autopatch line, you have 20 seconds to either access the autopatch or turn the repeater off or on. If the proper codes are not sent within 20 seconds the RPT CM automatically disconnects.

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Size 9 1/16 x 4 1/16

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 Jumpers on circuit board and frequency control pots on tone decoders allow
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SYNTHESIZER, see Ham Radio, July 76, pg. 20-23, figures 21-24, Kit for \$115. Assembled and tested, \$140. Power supply to run from 117V additional \$15. CTD, P. O. Box 708, Cambridge, MA 02139.

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TELETYPEWRITER PARTS, gears, manuals, sup-plies, tape, toroids. SASE list. Typetronics, Box 8873, Ft. Lauderdale, Fl. 33310. Buy parts, late machines. late machines. FOR SALE: High power equipment — Two 833A tubes with sockets, \$30. Two type 6156 tubes, \$30. Two Taylor T300 in small cabinet with 1 KW supply (RF heater) \$50. Trans-former 6500VCT 3KVA, 2-872s, fil trans, chokes and filters, \$75. Thatrons, high power con-trols, overload relays, \$5 ea. Filter capacitors: 25.6UF 2kv, \$10. 16MF, 650VAC PF \$5. Panel meters, cheap. Equipment: Hewlett-Packard digital 521A, 521CR, 522B. Berkeley 5556, Computor Measurements Corp. 2008, \$50 each. Mike Mitchell, 3564 Glenwood Ave., To-ledo, Ohio 43610. Tel. 1-419-4761 or 1-419-536-4073.

ledo, Ohio 43610. Tel. 1-419-4761 or 1-419-536-4073. **BROWNIE W3CJI** — 3035B Lehigh. Allentown, Pa. 18103. Samples with cut cat-

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Coming Events

NEW YORK: The Kings County Repeater Association, will hold an indoor flea market on Sunday, December 19, 1976 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Located at 910 Union St., Brooklvn, N. Y. (at Grand Army Plaza). Sellers \$3, buyers \$1. Children free. Refreshments available. Talk in on 146.43 and 146.52.

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27 NOVEMBER 1976 (9 PM to 1 AM local time) The twenty-fourth annual 10 Meter Ground Wave Contest sponsored by the Breeze Shooters, Inc., of Pa. All modes permissible. Points are determined on a distance and input power basis with separate awards for leaders in four circular zones centered on the Point in downtown Pittsburgh. Mobiles and Novice/ Technician also compete for separate awards. Logs must be postmarked by December 6. Logs and rules available from Richard Evanuik, WA3LUM, 311 Evergreen Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15209.

15209. VINTAGE RADIO. First Southwest Vintage Ra-dio & Phonograph Convention, 5th, 6th, and 7th of November at the Ramada Inn-Dallas East in Dallas, Texas. Forums on collecting of antique and vintage radios, restoration of antique radios, Classic Radios (McMurdo-Silver Scott) antique phonographs, and general Q&A. The usual banquet, swap sessions, and an auc-tion will also be held. Of special interest will be a contest for various equipment submitted by convention registrants. Three prizes will be awarded in each division. In addition a "Best of Show" award will also be made. The cate-gories are as follows: 1. Crystal Sets; 2. TRF Receivers (pre-1930); 3. Regenerative Receivers (pre-1930); 4. Super heterodyne Receivers (pre-1930); 5. Components and Assemblies; 6. Loud-speakers (horn, etc); 7. Homebrew and Kit re-ceivers (pre-1930); 8. AC Table receivers (post-1930); 9. AC Console receivers (post-1930); 10. Classic Receivers (Mc Murdo-Silver, etc.); 11. Ham gear (pre-1940); 12. Phonographs, outside horn; 13. Phonographs, inside horn; 14. Telephone/Telegraph. For more information and pre-registration packet please contact CONVENTION SVRPS, P. O. Box 19406, Dallas, Texas 75219. Texas 75219.

"ICELANDIC RADIOAMATEURS" (I.R.A.), was founded thirty years ago. To celebrate, the society has issued "The lcelandic Radioama-teur Award" (IRAA). The requirements for the IRAA have been based on the I.T.U. zonal sys-tem in order that all radioamateurs may stand an equal chance in obtaining the award, re-gardless of geographical position. Rules and requirements for the Icelandic Radioamateur Award are available from I.R.A., P. O. Box 1058, Reykjavik, Iceland or from HAM RADIO Magazine. Our club station, TF3IRA, will be operated occasionally throughout this year with the special callsign TF3ØIRA beginning with operation from Pjorsardalur area, near Mt. Hekla.

Mt. Hekla. **S O W P CHRISTMAS QSO PARTY.** The Society of Wireless Pioneers will conduct a member-ship on-the-air QSO Party on the weekend of December 18 and 19, 1976. The Party will cover the full 48-hour GMT period and will be the first "voice" Party scheduled by the So-ciety. The purpose of the affair will be to give members an opportunity to meet one another and to pass along their season's greetings, etc. There will be no formal exchange re-quirements and no need to submit logs. All members with a phone capability are en-couraged to participate. The call will be CQ SOWP. While there will be no certificates awarded, everyone who takes part will be a winner by having an opportunity to renew old friendships, establish new ones and to con-tinue a comaraderie developed over the years. Suggested frequencies for the affair are 25 kHz (\pm) 5 kHz up from the low end of the general class phone portion of each amateur band.

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